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BENGALURU
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NEARBY

'Urja' drills 27 m in a day

BENGALURU

In a first for Namma Metro, tunnel boring machine Urja drilled a distance of 27 m on April 25. It is deployed between Cantonment and Pottery Town.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 2

SC/ST welfare spending: Of money lost in transit

BENGALURU

Since 2014, Karnataka has spent an impressive ₹1.84 lakh crore on the welfare and development of SCs and STs, who jointly constitute 24.1% of the State's population. Yet, government data reveals that the communities are lagging behind the State averages in several parameters.

KARNATAKA ▸ PAGE 6

11 die as chariot touches live wire

17 undergoing treatment after the accident near Thanjavur

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR

A pall of gloom descended on the Kalimedu hamlet near Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday morning, hours after a religious procession turned into a nightmare following the death of 11 persons.

The incident happened when a chariot came into contact with high-tension overhead power line, causing instant flames and electrocution.

Seventeen persons, who sustained injuries, are undergoing treatment at the Thanjavur Medical College Hospital.

Around midnight, the decorated idol of Apparperuman (Thirunavukkarasu Nayanar) was mounted on the chariot decorated with serial bulbs.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

Tragedy strikes: The chariot engulfed in flames in Kalimedu area of Thanjavur district on Wednesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Why can't Perarivalan be released: SC

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday offered the Union government an "escape route" by agreeing to have Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convict A.G. Perarivalan released from jail after serving a sentence of more than three decades.

The Supreme Court advised the Centre against pursuing a "bizarre", if not plainly "unconstitutional", argument that the Tamil Nadu Governor chose to "ignore" the State Cabinet's binding advice to release Perarivalan, who is serving a life sentence and is now on bail, because the President had the authority to take a decision on the mercy plea.

"Why don't you just agree to have him released? People who have served over 20 years are released... We are also offering you an escape route. Your argument that the Governor does not have the jurisdiction to take a decision on the mercy plea under Article 161 strikes a blow on the federal structure of the Constitution... Under which provision can the Governor refer the decision of the State Cabinet to the President," the apex court asked the Centre's counsel.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

'States not passing on fuel duty cut to people'

PM flays non-BJP governments for not reducing VAT

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that fuel prices were too high in some States ruled by BJP rivals and they were not passing on the benefits of the Centre's excise duty cut to the people.

"These States should bring in immediate remedial measures to stop this injustice," Mr. Modi said during an interaction with Chief Ministers to discuss the emerging COVID-19 situation.

"This harms the neighbouring States also. States like Karnataka and Gujarat undertook the tax reduction for the welfare of the people despite revenue loss, while their neighbouring States earned revenue by not reducing tax," he said.

The Prime Minister said that last November a request was made to reduce VAT, but many States, most of which are non-BJP-ruled ones like Maharashtra, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Jharkhand, did not do so for some reason.

He appealed to the States to ensure Centre-State cooperation, stating that this is the need of the hour because of the war situation when the global community is under stress and is facing challenges caused by disruption in the supply chain and rising cases of COVID-19.

The Prime Minister said that along with the pandemic-related challenges, the global community and the common man are facing the fallout of a war. "The situation of war which has arisen has affected the supply chain," Mr. Modi said in a reference to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

"In the current global scenario, for the strength of India's economy, coordination between the Centre and States in economic decisions is necessary. In the conditions imposed by global events, this spirit of cooperative federalism becomes important," he said in the context of fuel prices.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

> In the current global scenario, for the strength of India's economy, coordination between the Centre and States in economic decisions is necessary. In the conditions imposed by global events, this spirit of cooperative federalism becomes important
> NARENDRA MODI PRIME MINISTER

Opposition slams PM's remarks

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Opposition leaders sharply reacted to Mr. Modi's comments that States ruled by them had not reduced VAT on petrol and diesel. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her Maharashtra counterpart, Uddhav Thackeray, pointed out how much the Centre owed their respective States and flagged the Centre's discrimination against Opposition-ruled States and preferential treatment for the BJP-ruled ones.

FULL REPORT ON ▸ PAGE 11

SC fixes final sedition hearing on May 5

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday fixed May 5 for final hearing of the petitions challenging the constitutionality of the sedition law and made it clear that it will not brook any delay in the form of requests for adjournment.

A three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana scheduled the case for May 5 for final disposal after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Union of India, sought two or three days to file a counter-affidavit to the petitions.

Attorney General K.K. Venugopal is assisting the court in the case in the capacity of his constitutional office.

Initially, the Bench scheduled the case for hearing on the whole of May 5 and May 6. But Mr. Mehta pointed out that May 6 is a Friday and usually reserved for hearing miscellaneous cases.

The CJI, however, said the case would be heard on May 5 for the entirety of court hours. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal would lead the petitioners' side.

Last year, the CJI himself voiced what could be an unprecedented judicial criticism of the way sedition was used by the government to crush liberties. He questioned why a colonial law continued to survive.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

PSI exam scam: ADGP, Recruitment, shifted

Amrit Paul has been moved to Internal Security division

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

In the backdrop of the PSI recruitment scam that has also set off political ripples, the State Government on Wednesday shunted out Additional Director-General of Police, Recruitment, Amrit Paul. In his place R. Hithendra, ADGP, Crime and Technical Services, has been given concurrent charge of the post.

Mr. Paul has been transferred to head the Internal Security division, while Arun J. Chakravarthy has been transferred out of that post.

The Opposition Congress had come down on ruling party over the recruitment scam, blaming the Home Minister, and demanded that the head of recruitment, along with Home Minister, resign.

Last week, CID officials visited the recruitment office and verified the documents pertaining to the recruitment.

With the transfer of the head of the recruitment department, the CID will be questioning officials, including section supervisors , in charge of exam centres and security in-charges in connection with the case.

The CID has thus far arrested 16 people in connection with the examination scam. This includes Rudragowda Patil and his younger brother Mahantesh Patil, who were associated with the Congress, and two policemen.

Six people, including Divya Hagaragi, BJP leader and chairperson of Gyan Jyoti English Medium School where the exam malpractices were reported, Kashinath, principal of the school, and teachers Archana and Shanti Bai are absconding. A local court has issued arrest warrants against them after their plea for anticipatory bail was rejected. The scam had come to light after it was found that a candidate named Veeresh, who had scored 100 in one paper, had attempted very few questions. He had left the OMR sheet empty, apparently to be filled by invigilators.

Karnatak University Registrar questioned

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Malleswaram police investigating the assistant professor exam scam on Wednesday questioned the Registrar (Evaluation) of Karnatak University, Dharwad, who is allegedly linked to the prime accused, Soumya. H. Nagaraja had set the Geography question paper for the exam, which was leaked an hour before the exam was held on March 14.

The police suspect that the questions Soumya had before the exam on her mobile phone was sourced from him.

Questions shared

Meanwhile, the police took Soumya to her house in Mysuru for investigation. Soumya, working as a guest lecturer in Mysuru, had shared the questions with her friends on WhatsApp. The police have also detained a relative of Dr. Nagaraja for allegedly forwarding the questions to Soumya from her phone.

Exam time

Crossing the hurdle: Students coming out after appearing for the CBSE Class 10 board examination at Kendriya Vidyalaya in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, on Wednesday. Over 35 lakh students have enrolled for the exams this year. • S. MAHINSHA

Second wave saw the highest number of children infected

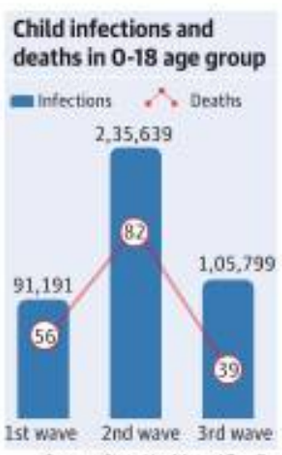
Most infections were in 10-18 age group across all 3 waves

AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

While several experts had warned that the third wave could see children infected the most, as COVID vaccination had not yet been rolled out for them then, data from the State Health Department show that the second wave saw the highest number of children infected (0-18 age group.)

While 2,35,639 children were infected in the second wave, less than half of this number was reported in the third wave at 1,05,799. The first wave saw 91,191 kids getting infected, the least among the three waves.

The highest number of children infected was in the 10-18 years age group across all three waves. While 63,852 children were infected in the first wave, 1,69,483 were infected in the second wave. The third wave saw 89,179 children in this age group getting infected, data revealed. In the 0-9 years age group, while 27,339 were infected in the first wave, the second and third wave saw 66,156 and 16,620 child infections, respectively.



In terms of overall deaths in the 0-18 years age group, the third wave saw the least number of children succumbing to the virus at 39. While 82 child deaths were reported during the second wave, 56 were reported in the first wave, according to the data.

The 13-member expert committee (headed by cardiologist Devi Prasad Shetty) that was set up by the Karnataka Government to analyse, advise and control the third wave of COVID-19 had estimated that around 3.4 lakh out of the total 2.3 crore population in the 0-18 age group might get infected during the peak of the third wave.

Better immune system

V. Ravi, member of the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) who also heads the State's Genomic Surveillance Committee, said child infections were less because children generally handle respiratory viruses much better than adults as their immune system is strong.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 3

Megalithic burial cluster excavated near Kollegal

Project is funded by the University of Mysore; site is close to an ancient human habitation

R. KRISHNA KUMAR
MYSURU

A megalithic burial cluster close to a site of human habitation belonging to the Iron Age has been discovered near Kollegal in Chamarajanagar district.

Megaliths in India are generally dated from 1,500 BC or earlier to 5th century BC and are some of the earliest records of prehistoric society.

Discovered at Budipadaga in Hanur taluk abutting the BRT Tiger Reserve and M.M. Hills Wildlife Sanctuary this is one of the rare findings or examples of both human habitation and burial clusters in close proximity.

There are three burial sites of different sizes at the cluster which is at a distance of nearly 300 metres from the habitation site which is now part of an agricultural field.

The excavation project is fully funded by the University of Mysore and a team headed by V. Shobha, Assistant Professor, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, is working on the project.

"As many as 40 burial sites were reported by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in the 1960s. The University approved a project to document and locate the exact sites that were mentioned by the ASI as no material is available pertaining to the earlier findings but for the names of the villages," said Ms. Shobha.

Pottery fragments

When the team set out to survey the area it could locate some of the sites reported by the ASI and in the process it stumbled upon evidence of human habitation in Budipadaga. The team recovered broken fragments of pottery apart from animal bones and was led to the site of the burial cluster by the local villagers.

"The burials are in the form of cairn circles or stone circle with boulders. The largest megalith is 9 metres in diameter while another is 6 metres and the smallest is 4.5 metres in diameter. We are in the process of clearing the dump on and around the burials and once opened it will reveal what is beneath," according to Ms. Shobha who is being assisted by a few researchers.

The megalithic burial site under excavation at Budipadaga near Kollegal in Chamarajanagar district. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"We have also collected charcoal samples from the habitation site in a bid to establish the date and if we can date the habitation, we can also date the burials," said Ms. Shobha.

The discovery of habitation site and burial cluster at the same place is interesting as it indicates continuity of a culture that existed since prehistoric times in the region. It also raises questions as to how people lived in this landscape and whether the area was part of an ancient route connecting to other regions, according to the team excavating the site.

G. Hemantha Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, University of Mysore, said the University has a record of funding such projects resulting in creation of knowledge database as they also bring credit to the varsity. "Professors from science streams tend to get seed money from the UGC and the varsity extends funding to lecturers if they propose a worthy project. So far about 20 such works have been funded," he added.

The current excavation is expected to find evidence to correlate the data from burial site with the habitation.

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Text & Context

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NEWS IN NUMBERS

Digital advancement

20 In million, the number of women certified to be digitally literate in India under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) programme dedicated to digital literacy, according to Union Minister Smriti Irani. PMGDISHA aims to empower people in rural areas by training them to operate computers or digital access devices (like tablets, smartphones, etc.), send and receive e-mails, browse the internet, access government services, and undertake digital payment, among others. PTI

Funds for IPPB

820 In ₹ crore, the additional funding approved by the Union Cabinet for India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) which will be utilised for the expansion of its services to all post offices in India. Union Minister Anurag Thakur said that out of the little over 1.56 lakh post offices, IPPB currently operates from 1.3 lakh post offices. He also said the Cabinet has given its in-principle approval for future fund infusion worth ₹500 crore into IPPB for meeting regulatory requirements and technological advancement. PTI

Fertilizers subsidised

60,939 In ₹ crore, the subsidy approved for phosphatic and potassic fertilisers, including DAP (Di-Ammonium Phosphate), for the first six months of this fiscal as part of efforts to provide soil nutrients to farmers at an affordable price. The Union Cabinet approved the proposal for nutrient based subsidy rates for phosphatic and potassic fertilisers for the Kharif season, which is from April 1 to September 30, according to an official statement. PTI

Russia cuts off EU

2 The number of European Union countries cut off from Russia's gas supply as a warning to other European countries. Cutting off NATO members Poland and Bulgaria, Russia has opened a new front in its war in Ukraine on Wednesday. The move has been denounced as 'blackmail' by European leaders. One day after the U.S. and other Western allies vowed to speed more and better military supplies to Ukraine, the Kremlin upped the ante, using its most essential export as leverage. European gas prices shot up after the news broke. AP

Launching astronauts

4 The number of astronauts launched to the International Space Station for NASA by SpaceX , less than two days after completing a flight chartered by millionaires. Its the first NASA crew comprised equally of men and women, including Jessica Watkins, the first Black woman making a long-term spaceflight. "This is one of the most diversified, I think, crews that we've had in a really, really long time," said NASA's space operations mission chief Kathy Lueders. SpaceX has now launched five crews for NASA and two private trips in just under two years. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

Indonesia's palm oil export ban

Why is the country suffering from an acute shortage of cooking oil? How will India be affected by this move?

THE GIST

- Indonesia, the world's biggest producer of palm oil, would be banning all exports of the commodity to reduce domestic shortages of cooking oil and bring down its skyrocketing prices.
- Due to short supply of alternative vegetable oils, lower-than-expected output from the second-biggest palm oil producer Malaysia due to pandemic-induced labour shortage, the global food inflation linked to the pandemic and the Ukraine crisis, the global prices of crude palm oil (CPO) have been rising significantly since the end of last year. To control these prices the Indonesian government introduced price caps for palm oil which led to hoarding and re-selling. All of these factors along with producers being discouraged from making more oil led to an acute shortage of cooking oil in Indonesia.
- India is the biggest importer of palm oil. Already grappling with record-high wholesale inflation, the late January export controls exercised by Indonesia had led to a 38% rise in the landed cost of CPO in India. The current ban is going to make the situation worse.

DIKSHA MUNJAL

The story so far: Indonesia, the world's biggest producer, exporter, and consumer of palm oil, will ban all exports of the commodity and its raw materials from April 28 to reduce domestic shortages of cooking oil and bring down its skyrocketing prices, the country's President, Joko Widodo, announced on April 22. The announcement came amid surging global food prices as a consequence of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. Food prices rose by almost 13% globally in March according to the United Nations. It also coincided with the spring meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington D.C., where policymakers raised global food security concerns, emphasising that countries should avoid hoarding food stocks and refrain from exercising export controls.

How important is palm oil to global supply chains?

Palm oil is the world's most widely used vegetable oil with its global production in crop year 2020 exceeding 73 million tonnes (MT), according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Output is estimated to be 77 MT for the current year. Made from the African oil palm, it is used as cooking oil, and in everything from cosmetics to processed food to cleaning products.

The oil palm industry has come under criticism for what are reportedly unsustainable production practices leading to deforestation, and exploitative labour practices carried forward from the colonial era.

However, palm oil is preferred by many as it is inexpensive; oil palms produce more oil per hectare than other vegetable oil plants. Indonesia and Malaysia together account for almost 90% of the global palm oil production, with Indonesia producing the largest quantity at over 43 MT in the 2021 crop year.

According to *Reuters*, palm oil makes up 40% of the global supply of the four most widely used edible oils: palm, soybean, rapeseed (canola), and sunflower oil. Indonesia is responsible for 60% of the global supply of palm oil.

Why are the prices of edible oils rising?

The prices of palm oil rose this year as demand increased because of the short supply of alternative vegetable oils. The production of soybean oil, the second most-produced oil, is expected to take a hit this year due to a poor end soybean season in major producer Argentina. The production of canola oil was hit in Canada last year due to drought; and supplies of sunflower oil, 80-90% of which is produced by Russia and Ukraine, has been badly hit due to the ongoing conflict.

Consumers across the globe have been bearing the brunt of these factors, with the pandemic driving up global edible oil prices to record highs. After Indonesia's unprecedented announcement to ban palm oil exports, global prices of other vegetable oils saw spikes. The price of soybean oil on April 22, saw a 4.5% rise, taking it to a record high of 83.21 cents per pound on the Chicago Board of Trade. Soy oil prices have already seen a 50% rise so far this year.

How bad is Indonesia's palm oil crisis?

Indonesia uses palm oil for cooking purposes. The palm oil used for cooking is made by processing crude palm oil (CPO). Due to short supply of alternative vegetable oils, lower-than-expected output from the second-biggest palm oil producer Malaysia due to pandemic-induced labour shortage, the global food inflation linked to the pandemic and the Ukraine crisis, the global prices of CPO had risen significantly since the end of last year.

The price of CPO rose from an already high rate of $1,131 per metric tonne in 2021 to its highest ever price of $1,552 in February this year. The global rise affected the price of palm oil in Indonesia, which sells two types of cooking oil – expensive branded cooking oil and cheaper non-branded oil in bulk. The country saw the price of branded palm oil go from 14,000 Indonesian rupiah (IDR) per litre in March 2021, to 22,000 IDR in March this year.

In order to make cooking oil affordable, the Indonesian government introduced price caps in late January; deciding that the MRP of branded oil could not exceed 14,000 IDR, while that of the local product would remain at 11,500 IDR. The issue of consumers hoarding the commodity and reports of it being resold, made the government introduce a two-litre-per-person rule for buying cooking oil. Some sellers were inking the fingers of consumers, as done during voting, to ensure that they don't buy twice.

Amid reports of hoarding of cooking oil by consumers and producers, and producers being discouraged from making more oil owing to the gap between rising global prices and capped prices at home, Indonesia, the biggest palm oil maker, started witnessing an acute shortage of cooking oil. To meet domestic demand, the government announced another policy called domestic market obligation (DMO), under which it required CPO exporters to sell 20% of export volume domestically, at a fixed price of 9,300 IDR per kg. This was later increased to 30%.

These policies, observers said, had an inverse effect on the domestic supply as the price controls and domestic quotas became ineffective amid the global price rise. The government retracted the price caps and export quota in late March but introduced a tax on exports, should the global prices go beyond $1,500 per metric tonne.

Indonesian Trade Minister Muhammad Lutfi also accused producers of engaging in illegal hoarding, cartel practices and of acquiring illicit export permits amid the export restrictions. Investigations into both these matters are currently underway in the country.

The cooking oil shortage could in part also be attributed to Indonesia using large quantities of CPO to make biodiesel, which it has branded as 'green diesel', despite palm oil production being known to be environmentally degrading. In late 2019, the country increased the palm oil content to be used in biodiesel to 30%. *Reuters* reported that it used over seven MT of palm oil out of its total national output of 41.4 MT in 2020, on biodiesel.

How will it impact India?

India is the biggest importer of palm oil which makes up 40% of its vegetable oil consumption, as per the USDA. India meets half of its annual need for 8.3 MT of palm oil from Indonesia. Last year, the Centre also unveiled its plan to boost India's domestic palm oil production.

Already grappling with record-high wholesale inflation, the late January export controls exercised by Indonesia had led to a 38% rise in the landed cost of CPO in India. The price of soybean oil, most consumed after palm oil, rose by 29% in the country this year; while sunflower oil, 90% of which India gets from Russia and Ukraine, stopped coming in almost completely.

Amid this situation, India had requested Indonesia in March to increase palm oil shipments to make up for the short supply and expensive alternatives. Despite the rising prices of the commodity, India's palm oil imports jumped 21% in March from the previous month as traders moved to secure alternatives to sunflower oil that could no longer be bought from Ukraine, four dealers told *Reuters*.

After the ban was announced by Indonesia, Atul Chaturvedi, president of the Solvent Extractors' Association of India told *The Hindu BusinessLine* "This uncalled-for action (by Indonesia) has got massive repercussions for India. Local prices in Indonesia may fall as a result of this decision, but prices in India may skyrocket. It is going to be a difficult time."

A palm oil plantation in South Kalimantan province, Indonesia. • REUTERS

EXPLAINER

At the end of the road: the status of the Future group

Why is one of the biggest players in modern retail heading for insolvency? How are Reliance and Amazon connected to this?

LALATENDU MISHRA

The story so far: The Future Group, once considered a formidable force in modern retail, is staring at a bleak future as two of its major group companies, Future Retail Ltd. and Future Enterprises Ltd., are headed for insolvency proceedings under the IBC (Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code) following defaults on payments to creditors, according to people familiar with the development.

Why did Reliance Retail withdraw from the ₹24,713 crore deal that would have allowed it to take over Future's retail operations?

Secured creditors of the Future Group last week rejected a proposal for a large transaction between Future Group entities and the retail arm of Reliance Industries Ltd., citing the legal challenges to the proposed transaction and the lack of clarity over the outlook for the deal. There was no concrete proposal for the creditors to vote on, said one of the people who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

As per an announcement made in August 2020, entities of Reliance were to acquire retail and warehousing assets of the Future Group for ₹24,713 crore. As part of the deal, Reliance was to invest a further ₹2,800 crore in Future Enterprises for a 13% stake. With Reliance calling off the deal, which it said could not be implemented following the rejection of the proposal by Future's secured creditors, the Future Group now has few options left to seek a new lease of life.

• REUTERS

The stage seems set for lenders to lay claim to the about ₹29,000 crore owed to them, through the insolvency process at the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

Will all of Future's assets be available as inventory when the insolvency process kicks in?

While it will take about six to eight months to start insolvency proceedings by the creditors to recover their dues with or without 'haircuts', Future Group's major businesses – mainly food and grocery – will suffer the most as their outlets are headed for closure or takeover. As per the now-scrapped deal, Reliance was to acquire assets of 19 Future Group firms.

Since February 2022, Reliance is believed to have taken over about 950 stores that were once operated by the Future group entities. Reports are that Reliance Retail has claimed that the takeover of these stores was independent of the ₹24,713-crore deal that has now fallen through.

The Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is said to have invested close to ₹4,000 crore in running Future's stores and supplying products over the past few months after the retail major ran out of cash. These stores were operated as Future Group branded stores even after Reliance began funding their operational needs.

How did Reliance acquire control over so many of the Future Group's stores?

Amid the legal battle between Amazon.com Inc. and Future Group, landlords of a large number of stores had reportedly approached Reliance to get the lease agreements transferred to its (Reliance) name as Future was unable to pay the rents. The Reliance arm took over the stores starting February 25, 2022, according to people familiar with the matter. The Future Group itself is of the opinion that it was a "hostile takeover by Reliance to acquire the assets by not paying the agreed-upon amount".

What is likely to happen to the remaining stores of the Future Group?

As of now, the Future Group is left with about 550 stores, including small-format stores. Since the cash-strapped Future Group is unlikely to be able to pay lease rentals to landlords, most of the stores are either headed for closure or may be taken over through lease agreements with landlords by either Reliance or any other competitor. According to people familiar with the development, most retail stores of Future face closure within a month from now due to lack of financial resources and supplies.

In 2019, Future Group had an employee base of 75,000 people, which has now declined to less than 13,000. The high-decibel legal battle between Amazon and the Future Group has also impacted footfalls.

Where does Amazon figure in this imbroglio?

Future had offered Amazon a 49% stake in Future Coupons, a promoter group entity. Through this transaction in December 2019, Amazon also acquired an indirect stake in Future Retail.

As losses mounted, the Future Group entered into the ₹24,713-crore agreement with Reliance Retail in August 2020. In October 2020, Amazon filed a case opposing the deal contending that the proposed transaction with Reliance violated certain clauses in Amazon's contract with the Future Group and also went for international arbitration. Amazon's contention was that as per its agreement with Future Coupons, the Future Group necessarily required written approval from the U.S. online behemoth for any deal with Reliance. In the still ongoing legal tussle, the Future Group won a brief reprieve last December when the competition commission of India suspended the Amazon-Future agreement citing false representation of motive on the part of Amazon.

However, when Future moved the NCLT for approval to the proposal with Reliance, secured creditors rejected the transaction, even though shareholders and unsecured creditors had granted approval. Today, footfalls into the few remaining functioning stores of the Future Group have plummeted.

THE GIST

- Two major group companies of the Future Group, Future Retail Ltd. and Future Enterprises Ltd., are headed for insolvency proceedings under the IBC (Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code) following defaults on payments to creditors.
- Entities of Reliance were to acquire retail and warehousing assets of the Future Group for ₹24,713 crore in August 2020. However, secured creditors of the Future Group rejected this proposal citing legal challenges and lack of clarity.
- The legal battle with Amazon was a big blow to a cash-strapped Future Group. Reliance who already has ownership over some of its stores was supposed to be their buy-out.

In a first for Namma Metro, Urja drills 27 metres in a single day

July 2023 set as deadline for completing tunnelling work, says BMRCL

SUCHITH KIDIYOOR
BENGALURU

In a first for the Namma Metro project, Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) Urja drilled a distance of 27 metres on April 25. The machine is currently deployed between Cantonment and Pottery Town.

There are nine TBMs deployed to build a tunnel network for a distance of 14 km under the phase II of Namma Metro project. Usually, each TBM bore a distance of maximum of six metres in a day, but Urja outperformed them all by drilling a distance of 27 metres.

Anjum Parwez, MD, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (BMRCL), said Urja's performance is an achievement. "Favourable geographical conditions, continuous supervision, and skilled manpower who change rings are prominent factors for TBM drilling a distance of 27 metres in a single day. Building a tunnel network is challenging in Bengaluru. TBMs encounter various challenges. In some stretches, hard rock and loose soil create a lot of hurdles for the machines. Luckily, for Urja, there were conducive geographical conditions in its path."

Tunnel Boring Machine Urja is currently deployed between Cantonment and Pottery Town. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Urja was first deployed by the contractor to tunnel a distance of 855 metres from Cantonment to Shivajinagar. In July 2020, the machine was deployed at Cantonment and it achieved breakthrough at Shivajinagar a year later. After completing the task, the machine was deployed at Cantonment to drill towards Pottery Town.

Mr. Parwez said: "After Pottery Town, tunnelling towards Nagawara is likely to be a challenging task because of the water table." The area from Pottery Town to Nagawara has a high density of buildings.

According to the BMRCL, the nine TBMs that are deployed to build a tunnel network from Dairy Circle to Nagawara have completed 40% of the task. Mr. Parwez said that TBMs are expected to complete the task by July 2023.

"Currently, all the nine TBMs are doing well. We are hoping that we are likely to complete the task of tunnelling for 28 km (parallel tunnels) by July 2023. Some TBMs have emerged at destined underground stations despite facing several hurdles. For example, two TBMs that burrowed a distance from Shivajinagar to M.G. Road, faced a tough task of boring hard rocks under Infantry Road. Clearing all hurdles, they emerged at M.G. Road station," he explained.

In phase I, the BMRCL spent years building a tunnel for a distance of 8.8 km. There were many instances of TBM breaking down after facing hard rocks between Majestic and Sampige Road station and Victoria Hospital to Chickpet. Non-completion of tunnel work on time was one of the major factors for delay in commissioning commercial operations on the entire 42-km stretch metro line under phase I.

BU to install chips to prevent sandalwood theft on campus

Digital numbering of all sandalwood trees under way: V-C

TANIA ANNY
BENGALURU

Constantly in the news for being unable to curtail sandalwood theft on its vast campus, Bangalore University (BU) is now in talks with the Institute of Wood Science and Technology to install chips in sandalwood trees and number each of them.

The 1,100-acre Bangalore University campus is home to the largest number of sandalwood trees in the city; the bio park, which houses most of them, is itself spread over 600 acres. A study conducted by the Department of Environmental Science of the varsity in 2019 shows that there are 2,444 sandalwood trees on the campus. However, the flipside has been that the site attracts thieves who have, for years, plundered this prized natural resource. An official from BU admitted that more than 40 trees have been missing from the campus in the last one year, most of them chopped and smuggled by miscreants.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, BU Vice-Chancellor K.R. Venugopal said at present, digital numbering of all sandalwood trees on the campus was going on. "Once this is completed, then decisions related to their security will be taken." Prof. Venugopal admitted that there was no data at present on how many trees have gone missing. But he said instances of thefts had reduced during the pandemic years.

Chairman of the Department of Environmental Science and Member of the Campus Development Committee, B.C. Nagaraja, said BU is the "land of sandalwood," but despite high security, some trees have been lost. "The main reason is that the university area is open to public access. We already discussed and drafted some solutions to save the trees, including deploying security, increasing the number of CCTV cameras, setting up watchtowers and installing chips in sandalwood trees - at least in all mature trees," he said.

The Bangalore University's Jnana Bharathi campus. •K. MURALI KUMAR

- The 1,100-acre Bangalore University campus is home to the largest number of sandalwood trees in the city; the bio park, which houses most of them, is spread over 600 acres.

University authorities are certain that thieves use battery-operated, noiseless wood-cutting machines and they let trees to dry so that they can carry them easily after two to three days. "Most of the trees are just about 40cm wide at the base. We are also certain that insiders or habitual offenders are involved because most of the incidents happen at night and is tough to carry out for a complete outsider," said an official, who wished anonymity, alleging also that complaints made to the Jnana Bharathi police do not help.

But an inspector in the Jnana Bharathi police station refuted the accusations: "Whenever we get calls that such things happen, we immediately respond and visit the place. Every day, our team patrols the main roads two to three times at night. But there were no complaints lodged by the university in at least one-and-a-half years."

Students flagged the need for better security overall. A student said: "The security on the campus is very poor. A few months ago, we heard a tree being cut near our hostel, but we were afraid and came back inside."

M. Kotresh, Registrar (Administration), BU, said the varsity is also looking at increasing the number of CCTV cameras and home guards. "Free public access to the campus is one of the main problems. The main entrances are open, and there is no way we can close entry after a certain time," he said.

Four students arrested for peddling drugs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The narcotics wing of the CCB on Wednesday arrested four college students peddling drugs in the city. The police also seized marijuana worth ₹1.5 lakh from them.

A team of officials raided a house in Yelahanka New Town and arrested the accused who hail from Kerala and are studying in a reputed colleges in the city. The accused are addicts and also peddled drugs to their contacts, the police said. They sourced the drugs from their contacts in Kerala and efforts are on to track down the supplier, a police officer said.

The police seized the mobile phones and an electronic weighing machine using which the accused would sell 10 g of marijuana for ₹500 .

In another case, the police arrested Mohammed Ranan, 27, and recovered MDMA and charas worth ₹6.5 lakh from him. The accused, hailing from Kerala, lived in a rented house in Hennur and peddled drugs. He used to source the drugs from the dark net and sell it to his clients for amounts ranging from ₹10,000 per gram of MDMA crystals and ₹1,000 per gram of charas.

Thai Airways flight suffers tyre deflation

All passengers disembarked safely from the flight that arrived from Bangkok

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A Thai Airways flight, which landed at Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), suffered deflation of the landing gear tyre on the right side, on Tuesday night.

The ground staff noticed one of the deflated tyres while the flight (TG 325) was taxiing from the runway towards the apron area. All the passengers disembarked safely after the incident. The flight had arrived from Bangkok. The incident caused disruption in the scheduled departure of the flight to Bangkok on Wednesday, leaving passengers stranded at the airport for hours.

A passenger vented his ire on social media by saying that the flight scheduled for departure at 12.30 a.m. was cancelled and no hotel reservations were provided till 5 a.m. for the passengers.

BIAL sources said 139 passengers had booked tickets on the flight. "All were provided hotel accommodations and rebooked for April 28 departure," a spokesperson said in a statement.

Canara Bank board meeting on May 6

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Canara Bank will hold its board meeting on May 6 to approve financial results and recommend consideration of dividend, if any, for the financial year 2021-22, a statement said.

Graduation Day organised

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Graduation Day ceremony organised by The Oxford Medical College Hospital and Research Center (TOMCHRC) was held on April 25.

According to a release, as many as 14 gold medals were distributed to the toppers in each subject of the pre, para, and clinical subjects.

Ashmita Menon, who bagged three gold medals, was declared best outgoing graduate. Alankrita Agarwal secured five gold medals. Ashmita Menon and Ryon Sam emerged best cultural talents for the year. Abipriya and Jonal Pradash Idicula were declared best sportspersons of the year. Founder and chairman of Narayana Health Devi Prasad Shetty was the chief guest at the event, while B.D. Athani, Medical Rehabilitation Specialist, former Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, was the guest of honour. Chairman of The Oxford Educational Institutions S.N.V.L. Naraismha Raju (Ramesh Raju) presided over the event.

Musical programme

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Alumni Association of St. Joseph's Indian Institutions, Bengaluru, will hold a musical programme titled 'Back to Joseph's reunion on April 30.

Performers

According to a release, Rajesh Krishnan, Shamita Malnad, Chandan Shetty, DJ Prithvi, and drummer Arun Kumar will perform. The event will be held from 4 p.m. on St. Joseph's Indian High School premises, on Grand Road.

Power shutdown today

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

There will be disruption in power supply on Thursday (April 28) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in view of carrying out shifting/conversion of transformers.

According to a release from BESCOM, HSR Layout Division, the areas that will be affected are: Velankani Station: Shamanna Building, Hosur Service Road, G.B. Palya, 6th Cross, Munireddy Layout, G.B. Palya 4th Cross, 9th Main, Papanna Reddy Layout and surrounding areas.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. GEM/2022/B/2126249
Dated: 22.04.2022

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-tenders for the following works:

Description of work	Approx. Value
Bengaluru Division- Provision of AC Coach attendant (ACCA) and linen distribution services in all nominated Primary Trains of Bengaluru Division for a period of one year.	Rs. 11,04,91,607/-

Last date for submission of bids: Up to 19.00 Hrs. of 13.05.2022

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer
Bengaluru

PUB/ST/UA/PRB/SWR/2022-23

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ADVERTISEMENT No. CPRI/05/2022

CPRI invites applications for one position of Project Assistant **on purely temporary basis**, for a period of one year. Interested candidates may refer website **https://cpri.res.in** for details regarding eligibility criteria, educational qualification etc. and submit their application as per the prescribed format posted in website with all relevant copies of documents by post latest by **17.05.2022**. Applications received after the due date will not be considered.

Chief Administrative Officer

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Construction Organisation, South Western Railway invites applications for Re-Engagement on contract basis as **LAND ACQUISITION ASSOCIATE** from eligible Retired State Government employees who had superannuated from Revenue / Forests Departments as Revenue Inspectors or alike, OR in Pay band 27650-52650, 30350-58250 of Karnataka State Govt. pay scale OR regular Group 'C' post in Pay Level-7 of 7th CPC or equivalent.

Total number of requirements is for 08 posts.

The last date for receipt of Applications through email at **recruitment.cnswr@gmail.com** is **10/05/2022** in a single and legible PDF file.

For details log on to www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in->About Us-> Construction Organisation->Recruitment

Deputy Chief Personnel Officer
Construction / Bengaluru Cantonment

PUB/CON/VPRB/SWR/2022-23

S.W.Railways SWRRLY SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of My client **Smt.Jayamala W/o Sri.Manjunath.M** to bring the notice of the general public that the **original registered absolute sale deed, bearing Doc No.16042/2004-05, CD No.BASD99, dated.29.09.2004,** registered in the office of the sub-register, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore, executed by Sri.M.K.Ramesh S/o Sri.N.Krishnappa, in favor of Sri.Munegowda.M S/o Sri.M.Muniyappa is missing/lost/misplaced. If any person's, firm, company, institution or organization has any claim are holding the afore mentioned document, they may contact the undersigned in writing within **7 days** from the date of this notice failing which it will be presumed that there are no claims.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All the piece and parcel of residential **House List No.1,** Katha No.248, CMC New Katha **No.197,** New property No.248/1, **presently BBMP Katha No.206/205/197/24/6/1,** Measuring East to West 30 feet and North to South 40 feet, Situated at **Mangammanapalya Village, Yellukunte Dhakle, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk,** Presently comes under the BBMP limits, Bangalore and bounded by:

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West by : Road,
North by : Government Road,
South by : Rajanna's Property

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Sangeetha** Satheesan D/o Satheesan Rajamanickam Wife of Vivek Maria Joseph Vincent, R/o:1372, Sangeetha Nilayam,5th Cross, Gokula 1st Stg, Phase 3, Yeshwanthpur, Bangaluru - 560022, changed my minor Daughter name from Dorothy Yazhini to Dorothy Yazhini Joseph for all purposes

I, **SHAKUNTALA** Devi D O B 02-07-1958 M/o Narender Panghal, Vill & Post Kharkari Sohan, Tehsil:Tosham, Dist: Bhiwani, Haryana-127040 have changed my name from Shakuntala Devi to Shakuntla vide affidavit dt: 26-04-2022 before Notary A.R.Muneer Ahmed, B'luru.

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e-TENDER NOTICE

No. Capt/829/2022-M1(MTL)-EST 27.04.2022

Online e-Tenders (2 Cover System) are invited from Insurance Companies registered with IRDA for enrolling Employees of C-Apt and their Spouses & Children under Group Insurance Scheme, vide **e-Tender No: 22/22-23/MTL & e-tender id 2022_CAPT_488016_1.** For detailed information log on to Website:
https://etenders.kerala.gov.in & www.captkerala.com

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EDUCATION HUB

A Business Initiative

ACCS-CDAC Foundation Award

Prof. Subhasis Chaudhuri, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay has conferred the ACCS-CDAC Foundation award for 2021 at a ceremony at International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIIT-B) on the 21st of April. The prestigious award is given to eminent scholars and researchers in the field of advanced computing and communications. The award recognises Prof. Chaudhuri for his seminal contributions to computer vision and computational photography which have led to significant industrial impact. "ACCS congratulates Prof. Chaudhuri for his path-breaking work and putting India on the map of international research in computer vision," said Mr. Jailendra Kumar, President of ACCS. Prof. Chaudhuri acknowledged saying, "I am humbled by the recognition of my work by ACCS. Such recognition goes a long way in further motivating us into research to find technological solutions for the enrichment of human life." In his congratulatory message, Mr. Magesh Ethirajan, Director General of C-DAC said, "Prof. Chaudhuri's research contribution in computer vision has spurred many products and startups in this field in India."

NIPM launches STUDENT CHAPTER along with SVIT

National Institute of Personnel Management (NIPM) - Karnataka Chapter in association with the Department of Management Studies, Sai Vidya Institute of Technology, incorporated the NIPM - KC - Student Chapter. This initiates another milestone for Institution - Industry Engagement through association with professional Bodies. Mr. Robert Cutina, Chairman, Mr.Sheenappa Gowda, co-chairman, represented NIPM - Karnataka Chapter. Prof AM Padmareddy, additional director, Dr Ramesh Babu H S, Principal, Dr. D Jogish, HOD, Dr. Pradeep NE, Head, T&P from SVIT, graced the ceremony.

Kristu Jayanti College organises conference to celebrate Earth Day

On the occasion of International Mother Earth Day, the Department of English (PG), Kristu Jayanti College (Autonomous) organised a two-day International Conference titled 'Ecosystems in the Poetics of Experiences' recently. A prelude to the conference was delivered by Fr. Joshy Mathew, the chief convenor of the conference, who reiterated Kristu Jayanti's status as the designated United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Hub 1 and its various efforts and focus towards sustainability. Delivering the presidential address, Rev. Father Principal, Dr. Augustine George spoke about the integrated development of mind, body and spirit through humanities and how we could connect with nature. During the keynote address, Dr. Lee F Ball, Chief Sustainability Officer, Appalachian State University, spoke about his experience of introducing sustainability as part of the academic curriculum in Appalachian State University. During the first plenary session, Dr. Danilo C. Diotay, AMA International University, Bahrain, advocated the use of green technology to mitigate the detrimental effects of human activity and elaborated on the ESD for 2030 by the UN. In the second plenary session, Lina Vincent, celebrity art curator from Goa, engaged the participants with a visual presentation of various artworks to stress the importance of art in creating ecological awareness, enumerating how artists are creating sustainable products and artworks using waste materials.

Graduation ceremony

"No matter how advanced the technology gets, our society will always need good doctors," said Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty, head of the Narayana Heart Center. Speaking at the graduation ceremony of the third year MBA course organised by Oxford Medical Mahavidyalaya Hospital & Research Centre at Attibele Mr. Prasad said, technology has grown tremendously in the medical field and it helps to provide better health care to the society. This has resulted in better health care for the people. But, with this technology, doctors' concern and empathy toward the patients are equally important. Doctors are the last hope of the patients, doctors should be aware of this fact and treat them well," he added. Dr. SNVL Narasimha Raju, President, Oxford University Hospital and Research Centre, said, "We have started a hospital for rural people and providing them good health care. Our doctors are visiting rural areas, with social responsibility and organising health camps and providing necessary treatment for the people." Dr. Athani, Director of the College, Mr. Srinivasalu, Principal Dr. MB Sanikop, Medical Superintendent, Dr. G. Mohan, and others were present on the occasion.

Special Postal Cover and Corporate My Stamp on Dr. MS Ramaiah released

India Post has released Special Cover and Corporate My Stamp to commemorate the centenary celebrations of Dr. MS Ramaiah. "We are happy to release Corporate My stamp and Special Cover on the pioneer in the education sector of Karnataka, Dr. MS Ramaiah", said Chief Post Master General Karnataka, S Rajendra Kumar, speaking at an event held at GPO in Bengaluru recently. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. MR Seetharam, Vice Chairman of Gokula Education Foundation (GEF), said "I thank the postal department for this special honour to Dr. MS Ramaiah. This day is of great pride for our family. He is always an inspiration to our family and many others".

ABSTRACT

A look at child and adolescent healthcare systems

Children are considered the bulwark of a nation's future, and easing the passage for their growth and development should be the highest priority

THE GIST

- Over 8.6 million deaths occurred among children and adolescents in 2019. A new *Lancet* series calls attention to the crisis in the children and adolescent sector, urging for a complete rehaul of the healthcare system.
- The papers in the series take a broadspan, expansive view of the situation. The papers look at the effects of early life poverty on the growth and development of children, highlights the huge inequities in the system and suggests redesigning service delivery to maximise outcomes.
- The authors while calling for efforts to reimagine the delivery of services that will help children thrive, mentions that a piecemeal approach, catering only to certain age groups may not be the best way to handle the crisis in child healthcare.

RAMYA KANNAN

While incremental progress has been recorded in various sectors of child and adolescent health across the globe, there is a real risk that nations might completely fail to meet the United Nation's sustainable development targets. Consider this single fact: Over 8.6 million deaths occurred among children and adolescents (0-20 years) in 2019. A new *Lancet* series calls attention to the crisis in the children and adolescent sector, urging for a complete rehaul of the way things are being done now.

A series of four papers set out the current position, with the gains that have been made globally, but points out the stark variations in the global scenario, with some nations' showing more marked improvements than others.

Series coordinator and author Zulfiqar Bhutta, from The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) Centre for Global Child Health, Toronto and the Aga Khan University, Karachi says: "We have less than eight years to meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and many child and adolescent health targets are off track. A holistic approach that supports children and their families from before birth through early adulthood is urgently needed to bring us back in line, building a foundation that will last a lifetime and improve health outcomes, economies, and society." Children are considered the bulwark of a nation's future, and easing the passage for their growth and development is part of the process of not only ensuring human rights of individuals, but also guaranteeing a country's hereafter.

The need for comprehensive care

The papers in the series take a broadspan, expansive view of the situation – exploring the determinants and building blocks of thriving, from preconception through foetal development up to 20 years of age. The first considers conditions of survival, growth, disability and education, focusing on the crucial periods in the lifecycle before adulthood that form the foundation for building human capital. It indicates that globally, an estimated 8.62 million deaths occurred between 28 weeks of gestation and 20 years of age in 2019.

Another paper studies the impact of early life poverty on growth and development of children. The authors use data from low and middle income countries to substantiate the negative effects of early life poverty on the survival, nutrition and cognitive development of children and adolescents.

The third paper, reviewing the evidence available, acknowledges that progress has been

The authors call for comprehensive care that spans nutrition, preventive health, education, economic, and community support across age groups from preconception through the age of 20

made globally in improving the coverage of key maternal, newborn, and early childhood interventions in low-income and middle-income countries, recording the advancements as contributing to a fall in child mortality and morbidity. However, there are huge inequities, and several children and adolescents do not thrive or survive because low-cost interventions are not deployed to their benefit. While calling for scaling-up of evidence-based interventions for children under five years, the authors also go on to highlight interventions for school-going children and the period of transition from childhood to adolescence. This includes recommendations to support mental health, address unintentional injuries, non-communicable diseases, and neglected tropical diseases.

Yet another paper looks at improving health and social systems for all children in low and middle income countries, and suggests structural innovations that could be employed to deliver quality services for them. The authors argue that "structural reforms are more likely to improve service quality substantially and at scale than are micro-level efforts. Promising approaches include governing for quality (eg, leadership, expert management, and learning systems), redesigning service delivery to maximise outcomes, and empowering families to better care for children and to demand quality care from health and social systems."

Effects of the pandemic

Naturally enough, the pandemic makes an appearance, read into the context of identifying the chinks in the armour or the challenges in delivering appropriate services to children and adolescents. "The COVID-19 pandemic showed us the devastating effects that gaps in care and education can have on children. Health and social systems must be better equipped to work together to address the emerging needs of children and families as part of the effort to rebuild equitable and resilient services," according to Maureen Black from RTI International and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (U.S.).

Dr. Bhutta adds: "The challenges faced in responding to the needs of children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic should serve as a wake-up call to the global community, underlining the urgent need to transform the child and adolescent health agenda on a global scale."

The series, while calling for efforts to reimagine the delivery of services that will help children thrive, mentions that a piecemeal approach, catering only to certain age groups may not be the best way to handle the crises.

Instead, the authors call for comprehensive care that spans nutrition, preventive health, education, economic, and community support across age groups from preconception through the age of 20. The close involvement of families, particularly in offering support right from the stage of pregnancy, continuing through the relevant years allowing the child to bloom, is also recommended strongly. It's in the best interests of nations to take these recommendations in earnest, and ensure their future is taken care of in the present.

To read the series of papers, please go to this link: https://bit.ly/3SpPnDA

THE DAILY QUIZ

On this date, 75 years ago, Thor Heyerdahl and five fellow adventurers embarked on the famous Kon-Tiki expedition to show that ancient people could have made long sea voyages. A quiz on adventurers and explorers

1 Who was Kon-Tiki and what were the starting and destination points of the expedition?

2 If Roald Amundsen is credited with being the first human to reach the South Pole, who was the first to the North?

3 On May 21, 2018, INSV Tarini made history. How?

4 Which UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Americas was made public by American explorer Hiram Bingham III?

5 Who wrote the travelogue *The Rihla, or A Masterpiece to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travelling*?

6 Why is May 20, 1498, significant in Indian history?

7 With which famous explorer would one associate the ships Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria?

8 Elizabeth Cochran Seaman achieved fame by beating the fictitious Phileas Fogg in going around the world in 72 days rather than 80. How is she better known?

◄ Identify her and her claim to fame.

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This president features in one of Frederick Forsyth's most celebrated thrillers. He rewrote the Constitution of France and is considered the founder of the "Fifth Republic". **Ans: Charles de Gaulle**

2. The last President of the influential Republican political club called the Jacobins, this French leader was identified with the violently radical period of the French revolution called the "Reign of Terror". **Ans: Maximilien Robespierre**

3. The French president who served the longest tenure. **Ans: Francois Mitterrand**

4. This leader once ran as the candidate for the seat of "French India" in the French National Assembly in 1951 and won. Later, he became the first Chief Minister of Pondicherry. **Ans: Édouard Goubert**

5. This person's government was notable for negotiating an agreement with Ho Chi Minh for French withdrawal from Vietnam and for an agreement for the independence of Tunisia from France. **Ans: Pierre Mendès France**

Visual. Name this legendary French figure who was sought to be appropriated by all currents of the French polity. **Ans: Joan of Arc**

Early Birds: Jharna Kamdar| Manya Gupta| Peeyush Srivastava| Kriti Tiwari| Sudhi Agarwal

Compiled by: V.V. Ramanan

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Good morning, sir."

"Good morning."

"What is the meaning of "He is pushing fifty, sir?"

"It means he is approaching the age of fifty. For a man who is pushing seventy, he is strong and alert. This is used in informal contexts. The expression is not used of people under forty. That is, you don't say 'He is pushing twenty'."

"What is the difference between 'argument' and 'quarrel'?"

"When you argue, you try to present your case with reasons. You argue to convince another. A quarrel takes place when people lose their temper. Arguments can lead to a quarrel, but arguments are different from quarrels. By the way, how was your trip to Bombay?"

"It was awful, sir. I took a room in a hotel. The whole place was stultifying."

"What do you mean by 'stultifying'?"

"Suffocating, sir".

"Well, a lot of people use it in that sense. But it doesn't mean that. To stultify means 'to make stupid or dull.' The stultifying effect of monotonous work has to be seen to be believed".

"What is the difference between 'approve' and 'approve of' sir?"

" 'Approve' means 'agree to, confirm'.

The minutes of the meeting were read and approved.

The plan I submitted to the Municipality has been approved.

'Approve of means 'regard with favour'.

He didn't approve of my taking leave now.

He didn't approve of her behaviour.

The family did not approve of her marriage to John.

I hope you understand the difference now".

"What is the difference between 'intense' and 'intensive' sir?

" 'Intense' means 'strong in quality or feeling'.

The heat is intense.

She is a very intense person.

'Intensive' is the opposite of 'extensive'. You talk about 'intensive cultivation as opposed to 'extensive cultivation'. You concentrate on a limited area in intensive cultivation. 'Intensive' is used when you pay a lot of attention 'to a small amount of something' or when you pay great attention to something during a short period of time.

Examples:

Intensive care in a hospital.

Intensive therapy.

When a long course is sought to be compressed in a short period, the short course is called an intensive course.

I am interested in joining a six-week intensive course in German.

Well, let's stop here. You look tense. Goodbye."

"Thank you, sir. Goodbye."

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, APR. 28
RISE 06:00 SET 18:34
RISE 04:18 SET 16:37

FRIDAY, APR. 29
RISE 06:00 SET 18:34
RISE 04:56 SET 17:27

SATURDAY, APR. 30
RISE 06:00 SET 18:34
RISE 05:34 SET 18:15

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	25
Mysuru	35	22
Bengaluru	35	24

Bengaluru Today
35°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm and humid. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C A dry weather is likely. Day will be warm and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant.

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Govt. will go all out to vaccinate children in 6-12 age group: CM

'Vaccination is the remedy while ensuring continuation of economic activities'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Amidst uptick in COVID-19 cases in Bengaluru and other parts of the State, the Karnataka Government has decided to take up vaccination on mission mode for children in the 6-12 age group in schools.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who participated in the Chief Ministers' virtual meeting on COVID-19 on April 27, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said a drive would be taken up in schools to vaccinate those between 6 and 12 years. Priority would also be given to children between 12 and 18 years, and senior citizens above 60 years.

Karnataka has 60 lakh doses of the vaccine.

At the meeting, Mr. Modi sounded a warning over a rise in COVID-19 cases. He told States to stay alert and take the threat of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 seriously.

Mr. Bommai said 10,000 tests would be conducted in Bengaluru, and 20,000 would be done in the rest of Karnataka every day.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai participating in a videoconference with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on COVID-19, in Bengaluru on Wednesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Bommai told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the COVID-19 situation in Karnataka is 'under control'. However, the State Government has decided to increase testing, among other precautionary measures.

"We explained the situation in the State. COVID-19 is under control in Karnataka," Mr. Bommai told reporters after attending a video conference, which was also attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

"The positivity rate has increased in Bengaluru since April 9. We will focus more on Bengaluru and increase testing. Daily 30,000 tests will be done across Karnataka," he said. "We will test patients already admitted in hospitals for SARI, ILI. If they are found positive, then samples will be sent for genome sequencing," the CM said.

The government would monitor international passengers landing in Bengaluru. "Two per cent of all international arrivals will be randomly tested, especially those coming from Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, and South Korea. They will be tele-tracked," Mr. Bommai said.

The State has over 50,000 beds in the government sector and over one lakh beds in the private sector. "There is a full stock of oxygen, and we are ready to face any emergency. The State has decided to add an additional 1,100 tonnes of oxygen to our existing capacity," he said.

"Vaccination is the remedy along with precautionary measures while ensuring continuation of economic activities," Mr. Bommai said. "Unnecessary restrictions will not be imposed." As a precautionary measure, he said, "We will conduct a fire safety audit in hospitals to prevent untoward incidents," he said.

Already, guidelines have been issued to make wearing of masks mandatory.

FROM PAGE ONE

Second wave saw the highest number of children infected

A file photo of a child getting tested in Bengaluru.

"The fourth wave is likely to follow a similar pattern and could target adults the most," Dr. Ravi said.

"The receptors for SARS-CoV-2 virus are not fully expressed in children as much as in adults. And, it is because of this the chances of children developing severe forms of the disease are very less. However, some children did develop multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C) during the later half of recovery period. This was mainly in those who did not develop good neutralising antibodies," he said.

Chikkanarasa Reddy, professor of Paediatrics at Bowring and Lady Curzon Medical College and Research Institute, also said children are at a much lower risk compared to older adults. "It is because of this, only a fraction of the infected children developed severe forms of the disease," he said.

He said the lesser number of infections in the third wave could also be because many did not get tested. "Many parents did not get their kids tested mainly because the symptoms were mild. Parents waited for two-three days before consulting a doctor and by then most children recovered. This is similar to what most people did in the third wave. As all who developed symptoms did not get tested, the actual number of child infections may not have been recorded," he said.

Asha Benekappa, former director of the State-run Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health, said children do not tend to develop a severe form of the disease because their immunological system is intact and active. "Children are less susceptible to infection by COVID as the expression of the ACE2 receptors, which is the entry point for the virus, is lower. This varies with age. Very young children getting infected and dying with COVID have alternate receptors like GPP-78 for virus entry," she said.

"Except for 5%-10%, children do not have comorbidities, which is an added protective factor. Moreover, as all childhood vaccines are live viral vaccines, they are all the more protected," said Dr. Benekappa, who heads the Department of Paediatrics at Dr Chandramma Dayananda Sagar Institute of Medical Education and Research.

Cases up to 126 in State

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Karnataka on Wednesday saw an uptick in cases with 126 new COVID-19 infections reported. With this, the day's Test Positivity Rate (TPR) rose to 1.16%. The weekly TPR touched 1.09% and the total number of cases rose to 39,47,209.

Of the new cases, 114 cases have been reported from Bengaluru Urban alone. With zero deaths, the State's toll remained 40,057. Besides, 42 deaths of patients due to non-COVID-19 reasons have also been recorded.

As many as 99 persons were discharged on Wednesday taking the total recoveries to 39,05,397. Active cases touched 1,713.

Electrocution death: 'Relief as per guidelines'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Compensation would be paid according to the guidelines of the Energy Department for the 22-year-old youth who died due to electrocution in Bengaluru, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said.

Speaking to media persons after participating in a video conference with the Prime Minister on Wednesday, he said: "A thorough probe would be conducted into the cause for the death. Action would be taken against the officials responsible for the mishap. Such incidents cannot be tolerated. Instructions have been issued to inquire whether the mishap happened due to the optical fibre wire or live electrical wire," he said, replying to questions on alleged negligence on part of BBMP and BESCOM.

Water Adalat today

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) will hold water Adalat on Thursday from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

It will be held at the following sub-divisions: South Village 2, South East 5, West Village-1, South West-4, East Village-3, East Village-1, North West 5, North East 3 and North 1.

For any issues regarding the water supply, consumers can contact helpline number 1916 or WhatsApp number 8762228888.

BU's 56th convocation tomorrow

68,211 students can download certificates from DigiLocker

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The 56th annual convocation of Bangalore University (BU) that will be held on Friday at Jnanajyothi auditorium, Central College campus, will see 321 gold medals being awarded to 186 students, 132 cash prizes, and 127 Ph.D. degrees being conferred.

According to a press release on Wednesday, varsity Chancellor and Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot will preside over the convocation ceremony, while S.C. Sharma, director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bengaluru, will deliver the convocation address. Minister for Higher Education C.N. Ashwath Narayan, who is also the Pro-Chancellor, will grace the occasion, the release said.

Three achievers - philanthropist from ISKCON Madhu Pandit Dasa, renowned artist S.G. Vasudev, and social reformer and artist M.S. Muthuraj - are being recognised for their services in respective fields and honorary doctorates would be conferred on them.

Gold medallists

Sushma H., M.Sc.
Organic Chemistry, Department of Chemistry (7 gold medals)
When I heard that I had bagged 7 gold medals, I was both surprised and happy that I was able to fulfil my father's dream. I placed emphasis on understanding the concepts well enough to teach it. I had also topped in B.Sc. at Mount Carmel College, but did not get any gold medals. Currently, I am preparing for UPSC. However, I wanted to finish M.Sc., as I was interested in Organic Chemistry. My family has been my backbone.

Aishwarya P.C., M.A.
Sanskrit, Department of Sanskrit (6 gold medals)
The jump from a graduate course in hotel management to a PG degree in Sanskrit is unusual. However, I was keen on this field as I wanted to be different from others, who usually take up MBA degree. I have been a Sanskrit student since class 8. Taking up a PG course in Sanskrit made sense to me.

Nandini V., B.Sc.,
Government First Grade College, Yelahanka (6 gold medals)
I am among the three daughters of my mother, a single parent, who has been managing our household, which includes my siblings and a disabled uncle and aunt. The rank list was announced a year ago. The convocation was put off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. My mother was ecstatic when I broke the news, as she felt her hard work had paid off. I am currently pursuing M.Sc. and aim to teach.

The release added that 68,211 students in all would be graduating. Gold medallists will receive medal consisting of 1.1 gm gold embossed on a 20 gm silver frame. The graduating students will be able to download their degree certificates immediately after the convocation from the DigiLocker and National Academic Depository, a initiative of Ministry of Information Technology and Ministry of Education, Government of India. The hard copy of the certificates will be available to students the same day after the convocation.

35th convocation of IGNOU held

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The 35th convocation of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Regional Centre, Bengaluru, was held on Tuesday. As many as 4,074 students were awarded the degree/diploma certificates. Of the 4,074 students, 1,311 are from masters, 1,006 from bachelors, 922 diploma students, and 835 students from certificate programmes. Sudarshan Bhat of B.Com and Jeejamol from B.Sc. Nursing won gold medals. Shubhajit Bhattacharya won an innovative award for designing a two-wheeler for students with disabilities.

CBSE Term-2 exam gets off to a smooth start

Term-1 exam was held in Nov.-Dec.

Students coming out after appearing in the CBSE Class X English paper at the Kendriya Vidyalaya, Hebbal, in Bengaluru on Wednesday. • SUDHAKARA JAIN

SUDHINDR A.B.
BENGALURU

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Term-2 examination on Wednesday got off to a smooth start in Karnataka with students appearing for English Language and Literature papers.

AISSE for Class X students will conclude on May 24, while AISSCE for Class XII on June 15.

Manasi B., a Class X student of BGS National Public School, Hulimavu, said the English paper was easy. "I had ample time to complete the paper and revise it too. The pre-board paper was much tougher than today's paper. I secured 96% in my Term-1 exam and in Term-2, I plan to score more," she said.

Director of Sri Kumaran Group Deepa Sridhar exuded confidence that this year too, the school would achieve excellent results in board exams. "Board exams are important in a student's life. We have trained our students well and given them confidence to face the board exams by conducting pre-boards, mock tests and exams," she said.

For this academic year, the CBSE had introduced a bifurcated format with two terms. The Term-1 board exams were held in November-December last year, while the Term-2 exams began on Tuesday. It is said the Board will consider marks obtained in both terms and more weightage will be given to the Term-2 exams.

Founder chairman of NPS Group K.P. Gopalkrishna feels that from the next academic year, the Board may restore the pre-pandemic one-exam format.

An English teacher said her students were happy with the paper. "It was easy and most questions were direct and not based on extrapolatory perspective," she added.

ED attaches bank accounts of fintech firms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Officials of Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Wednesday provisionally attached assets worth ₹6.17 crore belonging to various fintech companies under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The ED initiated money laundering investigations on the basis of two separate FIRs registered by the Marathahalli police station and the Mahalakshmipuram police station under various sections of IPC, 1860.

Investigation revealed that the accused persons, along with Chinese nationals, opened various companies in the name of several various persons for illegal transactions, offering loans, and raising investments through mobile apps like Cash Master, Krazy Rupee, Cashin, Rupee Menu etc.

"Notably, these companies have been incorporated during COVID-19 time at common addresses by active involvement of some Chinese nationals in connivance with certain Indian chartered accountants who helped in incorporation of these companies by using KYC documents of young Indian nationals in need of money, who were made directors and shareholders in these companies," an ED release said. The bank accounts of the companies were being operated and controlled by mainly Chinese nationals, on whose instructions the said companies were incorporated, it added.

"The account numbers and payment gateways opened on the basis of KYC documents of these Indian nationals were utilised to provide loans to the public and high processing fees and usurious interest rates were charged and for the recovery of the loan amount and high interest rates, unethical ways adopted with the customers," it said.

These short-term loans were provided by these fintech companies through Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs). The fintech companies utilised their own funds received from abroad (mainly from China) for the purpose of giving loans at usurious rate of interest to unemployed youth and other vulnerable sections of society through the NBFCs by making arrangement of security deposit of the amount equivalent to the loans granted by the NBFCs to the borrowers. It was also revealed that these companies have layered and remitted the funds abroad, the ED said.

Selection of Management Operator for Tourist Facilities at Bet Dwarka, Gujarat

Components : Newly constructed Restaurant with covered seating capacity for more than 80 pax, Rooms, Dormitory & support infrastructure

Key Features: Located right next to Jetty point on Bet Dwarka. Right on the main road leading to Shree Bet Dwarkadhish Temple Newly Constructed Building at prime location

RFP Document can be downloaded from https://www.nprocure.com/ & https://www.gujarattourism.com/, **28/04/2022** onwards.
The Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **12/05/2022, 12:30 p.m.** For any further details, interested Bidders may contact **Mr. M. S. Joshi** at msjoshi@gujarattourism.com. The last date for submission of the Financial Bid (on n-procure website only) is **30/05/2022 upto 3:00** and Technical Bid is **01/06/2022 upto 3:00 p.m.**

Gujarat

Development of Tourist Facilities at Dholavira, Kutch, Gujarat

Components: Accommodation Facility, Cafeteria, Tourist Lounge / Tourist Reception Centre and support infrastructure

Key Features: Proximity to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Dholavira

RFP Document can be downloaded from https://www.nprocure.com/ & https://www.gujarattourism.com/, **28/04/2022** onwards.
The Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **12/05/2022, 12:00 Noon.** For any further details, interested Bidders may contact **Mr. M. S. Joshi** at msjoshi@gujarattourism.com. The last date for submission of the Financial Bid (on n-procure website only) is **27/05/2022 upto 3:00 p.m.** and Technical Bid is **30/05/2022 upto 3:00 p.m.**

Gujarat

THE HINDU
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Government of Karnataka

Office of the Deputy Director, Dept of Mines and Geology , Chitradurga-577501

No.: MGD/DDC/BSC_S/31-B/T.N./2022-23/08 Date: 22.04.2022

Corrigendum Notice

Notice Inviting e-Tender cum Auction was published on 23.04.2022 in Prajavani and other Newspapers and in the said Notice, Deputy Director, Mines and Geology Department, Chitradurga as published should be read as "Deputy Director and Member Secretary, District Task Force (Mines) Committee, Chitradurga."

Sd/- Deputy Director and Member Secretary, District Task Force (Mines) Committee, Chitradurga.

DIPR/CTA/MCA/78/2022-23

KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

(RAICHUR THERMAL POWER STATION)

CIN: U65110KA1970SGC001919

No. EEP/e-tender/A1 A2/46 Dated: 21.04.2022

ABSTRACT BID NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement Portal only)

E-tenders are published in GoK e-portal **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** under **"GOODS"** category on **18.04.2022 & 19.04.2022, 20.04.2022** and **21.04.2022** as per RTPS requirements. **Tender No. BRIEF DETAILS OF GOODS Procurement of: 1) RTPS/MRP52/G/21-22/3749** Tooth Expansion Joint. **2) RTPS/MRP52/G/21-22/3711** Worm Shaft & Gear with Key. **3) RTPS/MRP52/G/21-22/3720** Coupling, Spider, Love Joy Coupling. **4) RTPS/MRP52/G/21-22/3750** Outlet Venturi Assembly. **5) RTPS/MRP66/G/21-22/4591** Refrigerant gas & Fire Extinguisher. **6) RTPS/MRP53/G/21-22/3181** Lock Washers, Gub screws, Shims. **7) RTPS/MRP61/G/21-22/1519** Ash handling system spares. **8) RTPS/MRP79/G/21-22/4090** Procurement of Bikes. **9)* RTPS/MRP81/G/21-22/1616** Railway track materials such as 1 in 81/2 Pt & Cros, Cms Cros 52 Kg, Switch Box & Clamp. **10)* RTPS/MRP81/G/21-22/1615** Railway track materials such as MS rails, Tingue rails, Fish plate, Steel linear. **11)* RTPS/MRP81/G/21-22/1607** 60kg PSC BG sleepers. **12) RTPS/MRP24/G/21-22/4516** Oil seal, O Ring, etc., **13) RTPS/MRP24/G/21-22/4514** Asbestos cloth, Wool felt, Cork sheet, etc., **14) RTPS/MRP65/G/21-22/1282** Transformer bun washers, aircells & expansion bellows. **15) RTPS/MRP44/G/21-22/4709** Plastic can, Sintex, Battery cell, Drinking water purifier, Dragon light. **16) RTPS/MRP29/G/21-22/3924** Tools like Pneumatic grinder, Hot air gun, Grease gun etc. **17) RTPS/MRP83/G/21-22/1592** Mega Phone, HDMMI to VGA Converter, Adapters. **18) RTPS/ MRP65/G/21-22/1278** Transformer oil & winding temperature indicator. **19) RTPS/MRP29/G/21-22/3921** Tools like Polyster slings, Electric hoist, Chain pulley block etc. **20) RTPS/MRP21/G/21-22/3897** Copper, MS & SS sheets. **21) RTPS/MRP44/G/21-22/4710** Floor carpet, Plastic sheet & Canvas & Nylon tarpauline. **22) RTPS/MRP44/G/21-22/4711** Lawn mower, Platform trolley & Fork lift tyres. **23) RTPS/MRP83/G/21-22/1591** Telephone Cables. *Sl No. 9,10,11 are on **Short term basis.** Last date & time for receipt of tenders For Sl. No.1: **04.05.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** For Sl. No. 2: **20.05.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** For Sl. No. 3: **12.05.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** For Sl. No. 4 & 6: **11.05.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** For Sl. No. 5: **06.05.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** For Sl. No. 7, 8, 12 & 13: **07.05.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** For Sl. No. 9, 10 & 11: **30.04.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** For Sl. No. 14 to 23: **07.05.2022, 17.30 Hrs.** All relevant details of the bids are available in the above mentioned e-portal. Further details can be had from the **Executive Engineer (Purchase),** RTPS, KPCL, Shaktinagar-584170, Dist. Raichur, Cell: 9449596527, E-mail: eeprtps@gmail.com

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KARNATAKA TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED

(A Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)

#03, 04th Floor, Embassy Icon Building, Bangalore – 560001.

Phone: 080-22352525 , Fax: 080-22352626

No: KTIL/TEN-04/01/2020-21 Date: 25.04.2022

NOTICE FOR INVITING TENDER

Office of Executive Engineer, Karnataka Tourism Infrastructure Limited, Engineering Unit, Bengaluru published the tender to develop Tourism activities at various parts of the state. The details of the tender and calendar of events are available at (e-Procurement Platform) **https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** e-procurement tender processing charges and EMD should be paid at e-Procurement Platform only. Eligible and Interested bidders can submit their bids before **17.05.2022.**

1) Name of the work: Providing C C Road from Main Road to Mahadeshwara Temple and other Work at Mandanahalli Village Mysore (T) Mysore (D). **Estimated Amount: Rs.100.00 Lakh.** Tender Number: **KTIL/MD/EE/AE-1/BID/TENDER/11/2_INDENT12. Calendar of Events**: 1) Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders **19.05.2022, 16.00 Hrs.** 2) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid : **20.05.2022, 17.00 Hrs.** 3) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid : **23.05.2022, 11.00 Hrs.**

2) Name of the work: Construction of Tourist Amenities at Meenakshi Temple Near KRS Backwater. **Estimated Amount: Rs.50.00 Lakhs.** Tender Number: **KTIL/MD/EE/AE-1/BID/TENDER/12/2022-23. Calendar of Events**: 1) Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders **21.05.2022, 17.00 Hrs.** 2) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid : **23.05.2022, 12.00 Hrs.** 3) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid : **26.05.2022, 11.00 Hrs.**

3) Name of the work: Development of Tourist Amenities at Basaveshwara Temple Near Bhogadhi Village At Mysore (D). **Estimated Amount: Rs.50.00 Lakhs.** Tender Number: **KTIL/MD/EE/AE-1/BID/TENDER/13/2022-23. Calendar of Events**: 1) Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders **21.05.2022, 17.00 Hrs.** 2) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid : **23.05.2022, 12.00 Hrs.** 3) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid : **26.05.2022, 11.00 Hrs.**

Postponement of Calendar of events (if any), subsequent notification, changes, amendments and selection / rejection of proposal shall be intimated only through e-Procurement portal and will not be published in newspapers. KTIL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders received without assigning any reasons thereof.

Sd/-

Sd/- Executive Engineer, And Tender Inviting Authority Karnataka Tourism Infrastructure Limited

DIPR/CP/318/Yakshi/2022-23

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

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BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

Office of the Executive Engineer, Road Infrastructure, Yalahanka Division, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560 002.

No: EE/RI/YNK/TEND/04/2022-23 Date: 27.04.2022

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)

(Through **GOK e-Procurement Portal** only)

The Executive Engineer, Road Infrastructure-Yalahanka Division, BBMP, Bengaluru, invites tenders from eligible Contractors registered in Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike or equivalent registration with CPWD/KPWD/ Railways/MES/National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction of works detailed in the table below. **(Standard Bid Document-KW4)**

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Appx. Amount Put to Tender (₹. in Lakhs)	EMD (₹. in Lakhs)
1	Repairs to damaged portion on 13th Main Road, 20th Cross Road of Sahakaranagara Amco Layout Main Road, Bhadrappa Layout Main Road, ORR from Bhadrappa Layout Signal to BEL Cricle (Yalahanka Zone)	135.01	2.03

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded in the e-procurement portal of Government of Karnataka from **29.04.2022**. (2) Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or before **07.05.2022** upto **5:30** pm. (3) Last Date for Receipt of Queries is **04.05.2022** upto **3:00** pm in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Road Infrastructure, Yalahanka Division, BBMP. (4) Pre-Tender Meeting will be held in the Office of the Chief Engineer, (Road Infrastructure) on **04.05.2022** at **4:00** pm. (4) Technical Bids will be opened in the Office of the Executive Engineer, (Road Infrastructure -Yalahanka Division) on **09.05.2022** at **4:30** pm. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours on working days or from website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Road Infrastructure-Yalahanka Division

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

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GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

ZILLA PANCHAYATH RAICHUR

THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION DIVISION RAICHUR

NO./EE/RDWS&S/RCR/TS/JJM/2022-23/36 DATED : 25-04-2022

:: SHORT TERM TENDER ::

The Executive Engineer RDWS & S Division Raichur invites tenders from eligible tenderers Registered under e-procurement civil contractors in Panchayath Engineering Department, for Providing water supply scheme to below works, as per KW-1,2, 3 & 4 Standard Bid Document Under JJM 2021-22 GOI&GOK Fund (85%), GP Contribution (5%). Community Contribution (10%). The tenderers may submit tenders for the works given in the table in GOK e- Procurement platform www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in only as per Rule 28 of the KTPP Act shall be followed.

1) Notification Date : 25-04-2022, 2) Download of tender schedule documents online : 25-04-2022, 3) Pre Biud Meeting at Offide of the Executive Engineer, RDWS & S Division, Raichur, 2nd Floor, Zilla Panchyath, Raichur : 04-05-2022 at 11:00, 4) Last date for receiving of filled tender documents : 16-05-2022 at 5:30 Pm, 5) Opening of Technical bid : 18-05-2022 at 11:00 Am, 5) Opening of Financial bid : 20-05-2022 at 11:00 Am

Indent Nos.: Lingasugur : Sindhanur : 40010, Manvi : 40011

More details can be had from the Office of the under signed and also through our website www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in by clicking the List of Tenders which will be link all Dept. works list.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, RDWS&S. Divn, Raichur.

DIP/Raichur/53/MC&A/2022-23

Government of Karnataka

Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department

Office of the Executive Engineer,

Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division, Mandya division, Mandya-571401.

email: eemimandya@gmail.com

No.EE/Mandya/Tec Sec/Notification /2021-22/177 Date :22.04.2022

Tender Extension Notification-1 Date : 22-04-2022

Subject : This office tender notification No : 14/2021-22, Date : 04-03-2022

Work pertaining to Head of Account 4702 MOT-05 Nos(Sl No:1,2,3,4&5) under this office tender notification No: 14/2021-22, Dated : 04.03.2022 have been postponed as under due to technical reason.

Sl. No.	Subject	As mentioned previously	Extended Dated
1	Information regarding tender will be available at this office	21.03.2022 office hours	02.05.2022 office hours
2	Last date of receipt of tender in e-procurement	28.03.2022 17-00 hours	04.05.2022 18-00 hours
3	Date of opening of Financial Bid	30.03.2021 11-00 hours	06.05.2022 11-00 hours
4	Dated of opening of Financial Bid	01.04.2022 11-00 hours	09.05.2022 11-00 hours

There will be no changes in the original tender notification and all the information regarding work is published in the "www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in" tender Portal

special Note: Any corrections regarding this tender notification will be published only in the "e-Procurement" portal.

Sd/-Executive Engineer, MI & GWD Division, Mandya.

DIPR/AD-MDY/MC&A/002/2022-23

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

Office of the Executive Engineer, Yelahanka Division, Yelahanka Zone, Bengaluru-560 064.

No.BBMP/YNK-D/EE/E-PMT-02/2022-23 Date: 27-04-2022

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) SHORT TERM TENDER

(Two Cover System) (Through GOK e-Procurement Portal Only)

The Executive Engineer, (Yelahanka Division), Yelahanka Zone, BBMP invites tenders from interested firms/Organisation for the below mentioned works for consultant for supervision project management and quality control.

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Approximate value of work (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (in Rs.)
1.	Consultancy Services for Detailed Project Report, Field Survey, General Report, Basic Drawing, Technical Report, Detailed Drawing, Detailed Cost Estimate for Improvements to Roads, drains and other developmental works at Yelahanka old Town, Maruthinagara, Sapthagiri Layout, Gandhinagara KHB Colony, Nehru Nagara, Shivanahalli, PDMS APTS premles and surrounding areas in Ward No.01 of Yelahanka Division under Amruth Nagarothan Grants. (Package No-01)	10.00	50,000/-
2.	Consultancy Services for Detailed Project Report, Field Survey, General Report, Basic Drawing, Technical Report, Detailed Drawing, Detailed Cost Estimate for Improvements to Roads, drains and other developmental works at 5th Phase, Puttenahalli, ISAAC Layout, Kondappa Layout, Kamakshamma Layout, Hanumappa Layout, A Sector and surrounding area in Ward No.02 & 04 of Yelahanka Division under Amruth Nagarothan Grants. (Package No.02).	12.5	50,000/-
3.	Consultancy Services for Detailed Project Report, Field Survey, General Report, Basic Drawing, Technical Report, Detailed Drawing, Detailed Cost Estimate for Improvements to Roads, drains and other developmental works at Askshaya, Thirumala Nagar, Attur Layout, Santhosh Nagara, Muneshwara Layout, Sri Sai Layout, B Sector and surrounding areas in Ward No.03 & 04 of Yelahanka Division under Amruth Nagarothan Grants. (Package No-03).	21.35	50,000/-
4.	Consultancy Services for Detailed Project Report, Field Survey, General Report, Basic Drawing, Technical Report, Detailed Drawing, Detailed Cost Estimate for Improvements to Roads, drains and other developmental works at 407, 707, 208 SFS, Major Akshay Girish Kumar Road, Yelahanka 4th & 5th Phae and surrounding areas in Ward No.01, 03, & 04 of Yelahanka Divison under Amruth Nagarothan Grants. (Package No.04)	10.00	50,000/-
5.	Consultancy Services for Detailed Project Report, Field Survey, General Report, Basic Drawing, Technical Report, Detailed Drawing, Detailed Cost Estimate for Improvements to Roads, drains and other developmental works at Shivamandira Road, Mathru Layout, Sharadanagar, Judicial Layout and surrounding areas in Ward No.02, 03 & 04 of Yelahanka Division under Amruth Nagarothan Grants. (Package No.05)	12.95	50,000/-
6.	Consultancy Services for Detailed Project Report, Field Survey, General Report, Basic Drawing, Technical Report, Detailed Drawing, Detailed Cost Estimate for Synthetic Tennis Court, Street Vending Zone & other development works at Judicial Layout Main and Cross Roads, Chikkabommasandra, Someshwaranagar, Allalasandra Village and surrounding areas in Ward No.04 of Yelahanka Division under Amruth Nagarothan Grants (Package No.06).	20.00	50,000/-

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal of the Govt. of Karnataka from **28-04-2022. (2)** Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or before **4:00 p.m. on 10-05-2022 (3)** Date of Pre bid meeting on **02-05-2022 at 4:00 p.m. (4)** Technical Bids will be opened on **11-05-2022 at 4:00 p.m.** Further particulars can be obtained from the above office during working hours on working days or from **website: https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-, Executive Engineer, Yelahanka Division, BBMP.

HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APTHAMITRA ON 14410

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

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GOVERNMENT OF KARANATAKA

(Karnataka Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Department)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION, DIVISION KALABURAGI-585105

Phone No: 08472-278634/256944, Email:eerwssglb14@gmail.com

No:EE/RDW&S/Dvn/Tech/2021-22/94 Dated : 25-04-2022

E-PROCUREMENT SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (TWO COVER)

The Executive Engineer Rural Drinking water & Sanitation Division, Kalaburagi on behalf of Honorable Governor, Karnataka here by invites separate Technical & Financial bid tender for drinking water works from eligible civil contractor detailed as below

The Tender Document with detailed conditions can be obtained through web site http://eporc.karnataka.gov.in and should be submitted through E-procurement system only

1) Name of work: **Afzalapur Taluka-02(Indent No 34199 & 37164 Call-2),** 2) Head of A/C : Jal Jeevan Mission 2021-22, 3) Eligibility of Contractor : Class-II & above, 4) Tender Amount: Min 1,69,26,716/-, Max 2,85,61,000/-, 5) Date of Commencement of downloading of Bidding document: **27-04-2022 11:00am,** 6) Cost of tender form and EMD: As per E-portal 7) Pre bid meeting date: **07-05-2022 at 11.00 am,** 8) Last Date to submit bids on e-portal : **11-05-2022 4.00pm,** 9) Opening of Techincal Bid: **12-05-2022 4.01pm,** 10) Opening of Financial Bid: **16-05-2022 11:00am,** 11) Address for any clarification reg.tender : Office of the Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking water & Sanitation, Division, PRE division 1st floor Kusanoor road Kalaburagi

Sd/- Executive Engineer RDW&S Division, Kalaburagi

DIP/Kalaburagi/84/MC&A/2022-23

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

Hutti - 584 115, Raichur Dist., Karnataka State. Ph: (08537) 275463, 276339, 275054

e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com website: www.huttigold.co.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION No.76/21-22, Dt. 28.04.2022

(Through e-Procurement Portal only)

Tenders are invited by "The Dy.General Manager (Materials)" for the procurement of following items from reputed manufacturers/authorized dealers, as detailed below.

Sl. No.	Description	Qty.	Approx. Value (Rs. in Crore)	EMD in (Rs.)
1	Supply of fabricated items. **HGML/2021-22/IND3286**	As per list	4.51	6,77,000/-

Calender of events:

1) Pre-bid meeting (Zoom) :- **06.05.2022 at 11.30 AM.**

2) Last date for receipt of tender:- **25.05.2022 at 4.00 P.M**

3) Opening of Technical Bid on :- **28.05.2022 at 10.00 A.M**

For further details interested bidders are advised to logon to website **https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the office of undersigned during working hours. For participating in the above tender bidder needs to be registered in e-procurement portal.

Sd/- Dy. General Manager (Materials)

"LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA"

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

Office of the Executive Engineer, Chickpet Division, 8th Main, 2nd Block, Jayanagar, Kanakanapalya, Bengaluru-560 011.

No.EE/CKP/E-PROC/01/2022-23 Date: 27-04-2022

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SHORT TERM TENDER

(Two Cover System) (Through GOK e-Procurement Portal Only)

The Executive Engineer, Chickpet Division, BBMP Bengaluru invites request for proposal from interested Firms/Organization for the consultancy services for project management consultancy works.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Estimate Cost (in Lakhs)	EMD (in Rs.)
1.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Comprehensive development & Providing asphalting to Roads and Improvements to drain & Culverts in Sunkenahalli & surrounding area in Ward No.142, Chickpet Constituency South Zone 2019-20, Package No.02 (GOK Serial No.1070).	1000.00	25000
2.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Improvements & Asphalting to bad Roads in Ward No.143, Chickpet Constituency South Zone 2019-20. Package No. 07 (GOK Searial No.1071).	800.00	20000
3.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Improvements and development of Parks and Play Ground in Ward No.144, Siddapura Annex-06, Sl.No.121.	200.00	10000
4.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Improvements and construction of BBMP Property in Ward No.144, Siddapura Annex-06, Sl.No.120.	200.00	10000
5.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Drain Road and other Infrastructure and development works in Chickpet Constituency South Zone 2019-20 Package No.03 (Annex-02 GOK Serial No.752).	1000.00	25000
6.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Comprehensive development and Improvements of Road and drains in Ward No. 145, Hombegowdanagara, Chickpet Constituency South Zone 2019-20, Package No.01, Annex-06 (GOK Serial No. 122).	1000.00	25000
7.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Improvements and development of Parks and Play Ground in Ward No.153, Jayanagar, Annex - 06, Sl.No.126.	200.00	10000
8.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Comprehensive development of Bad Roads and Improvements to Road side drains Footpaths and Concreting including culverts to selected Cross Main and other connecting Roads in Ward No.118, 143 Chickpet Constituency, South Zone 2019-20, Package No.06 (Comprising of 3 Works of Annexure-02, GOK Serial No.1052, 1073 and 1074).	1000.00	25000
9.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Comprehensive development of Comprehensive Development of Roads, Drains, Footpaths in Sunkenahalli, Siddapura, Lakkasandra in Ward No.142, 144, 145, 119, Chickpet Division (G O Sl.No. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 & 10) Package-9.	1050.00	26250
10.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Comprehensive development of Construction of Children Hospital Building near Siddaiah Road in Referral Hospital Building, Extension work of newly built referal hospital building, Improvement works to Pobhatti Hospital and Medical Officer Building & Development and additional improvements works in Ward No.118, 143 & 145 in Chickpet Division (G O Sl.No.1, 2, 6 & 11) Package-10.	1045.00	26125
11.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Comprehensive development of Construction of Shuttle Badminton Court Multipurpose Building development of parks and other improvement works at Chickpet Constituency, Annexure-2, Sl.No.1063, Annexure-6, Sl.No.111, 114, 115, 118 & 123.	750.00	18750
12.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Construction of Shuttle Badminton Court, Indoor Gym at MPED Building at 8th Main Road in Jayanagar 2nd Block in Ward No.153, Jayanagar.	500.00	12500
13.	Consultancy Services for Project Management Consultancy for the work of Construction of MPED Building at 8th Main Road, Jayanagara 2nd Block in Ward No.153, Jayanagar.	500.00	12500

Calendar of Events: (1) Downloading of RFP documents from: **28-04-2022 onwards. (2)** Last Date &Time for Queries (only through online): **02-05-2022 upto 2:00 p.m. (3)** Pre-bid meeting: **02-05-2022 at 3:00 p.m. (4)** Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders: **06-05-2022 upto 4:00 p.m. (5)** Opening of Technical bid: **07-05-2022 at 4:30 p.m. (6)** Opening of Financial bid (if Possible): After the approval of Technical Bid. Further particulars can be obtained from the above office during working hours on working days or from **website: https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-, Executive Engineer, Chickpet Division, BBMP.

HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APTHAMITRA ON 14410

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

सत्यमेव जयते
Government of Assam

Heralding Peace Fuelling Progress in Assam

APRIL 28 2022

Karbi Anglong

Dibrugarh

RALLY FOR PEACE, UNITY & DEVELOPMENT

Foundation stone laying for

- **College of Veterinary Science**
  Manja, Karbi Anglong
- **College of Agriculture**
  Kolonga, West Karbi Anglong
- **Model Government College**
  Umpanai, West Karbi Anglong

Creating human resources, boosting agriculture & animal husbandry and empowering youth through modern education

State-wide launch of

- **2,985 Amrit Sarovars**
  75+ water bodies of one hectare area each in every district for water conservation and livelihood generation

By Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Venue: Loringthepi, Karbi Anglong
Time: 11:30 a.m.

Inauguration of Dibrugarh Cancer Centre

Venue: AMCH, Dibrugarh
Time: 2.20 p.m.

Inauguration of 6 Cancer Centres

Barpeta | Tezpur | Jorhat
Darrang | Kokrajhar | Lakhimpur

Foundation stone laying for 7 Cancer Centres

Goalpara | Dhubri | Nagaon | Golaghat
Sivasagar | Tinsukia | Nalbari

By Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Venue: Khanikar, Dibrugarh
Time: 3.05 p.m.

A joint initiative of Government of Assam and Tata Trusts

3-level distributed cancer care model

South Asia's single largest affordable cancer care network of 17 hospitals under Assam Cancer Care Foundation

Facilities

Chemotherapy | Robotic Surgery | Bone Marrow Transplant
Diagnostic and Advance Imaging
Nuclear Medicine | Stem-Cell Research

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Spending on SC/ST welfare: A story of money lost in transit

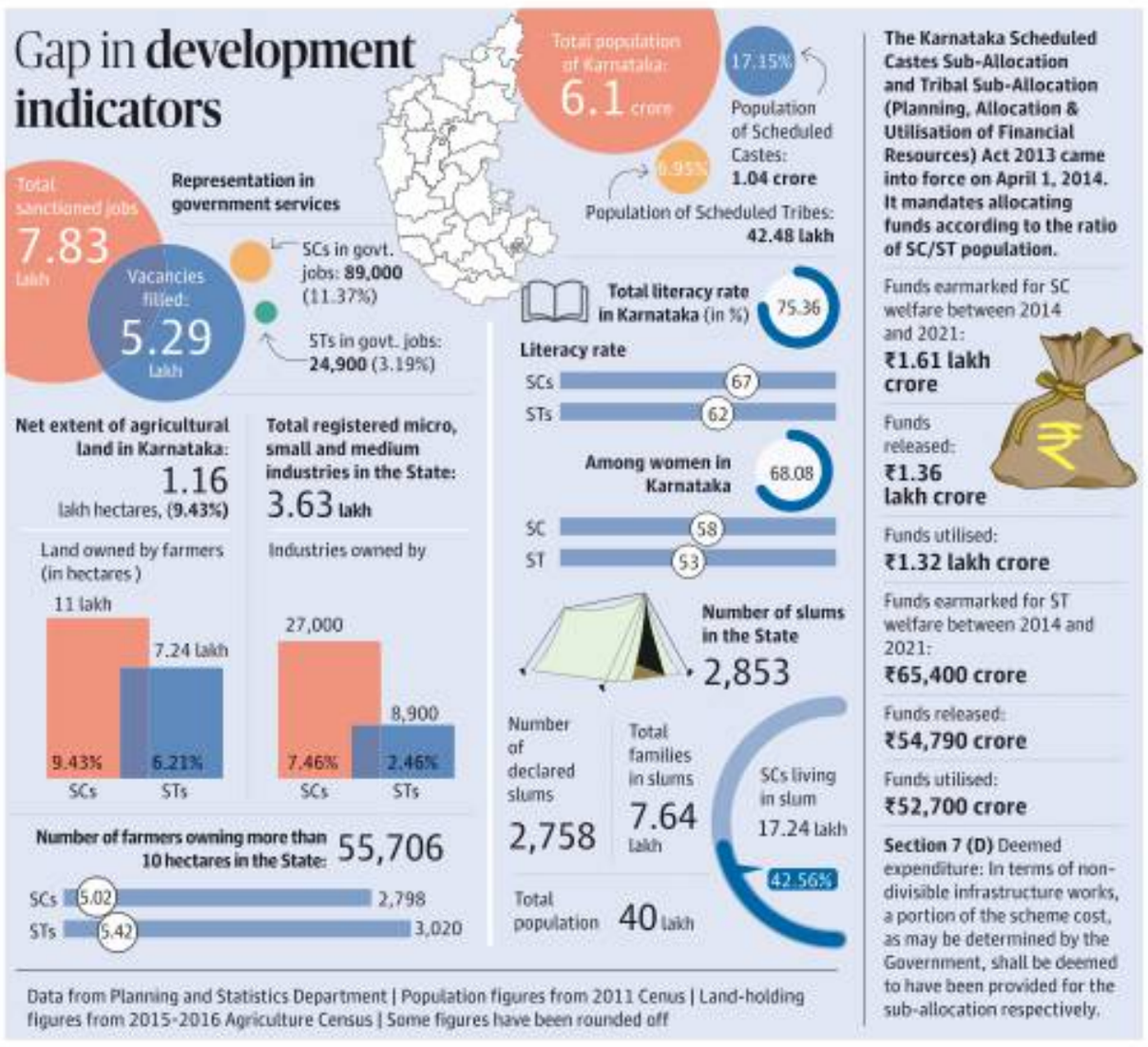
A substantial part of the amount allocated does not reach the targeted population because of a clause in the Act that came into force in 2014

SHARAT S. SRIVATSA
BENGALURU

Since 2014, Karnataka has spent an impressive ₹1.84 lakh crore on the welfare and development of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribe (STs), who jointly constitute 24.1% of the State's population. Yet, government data reveals that the communities are lagging behind the State averages in several parameters.

While the amount spent – a mandate after the Karnataka Scheduled Castes Sub-Allocation and Tribal Sub-Allocation (Planning, Allocation & Utilisation of Financial Resources) Act, 2013, came into force on April 1, 2014, allocating resources as per the population ratio – looks big on paper, in reality, data reveals, a large portion of the total amount has not reached the targeted population. In Karnataka, the SCs and STs constitute 17.15% and 6.95%, respectively, of the total population as per the 2011 Census.

After the Act came into force, as much as ₹2.26 lakh crore has been allocated to the Social Welfare Department, to be disbursed to different departments to undertake welfare works for the communities. While ₹1.9 lakh crore out of the ₹2.26 lakh crore allocated has been released, about ₹1.84 lakh crore has been spent.



Data from Planning and Statistics Department | Population figures from 2011 Census | Land-holding figures from 2015-2016 Agriculture Census | Some figures have been rounded off

Expenditure per family

The spent amount includes about ₹1.32 lakh crore for the welfare of SCs and about ₹52,000 crore for ST welfare. The data is part of an analysis done by the Planning and Statistics Department recently. If the total amount spent is calculated on the State's expenditure per family, it comes to about ₹66.09 lakh per SC family of an estimated 20.9 lakh SC families in the State, while it is about ₹62 lakh per ST family of an estimated 84,000 families in the State, government sources pointed out. However, one particular clause, it turns out, has been used extensively to divert funds. Section 7 D of the Act allows a certain amount of money to be used in exceptional cases on works that cannot be divided and considers such expenditure as "deemed expenditure". This has been used to divert funds for general purposes. Senior officials in the Social Welfare Department, however, insist that it cannot be termed as "diversion" since the Act provides for it.

A perusal of data of six big spending and infrastructure creating departments in the State – Public Works, Urban Development, Major Irrigation, Minor Irrigation, Health, and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj – shows that of the ₹1.32 lakh crore spent on the SC welfare, ₹44, 356 crore or about 26% of the total money has been largely spent for general purposes. Similarly, of the ₹52,700 crore spent on ST welfare, 30% of the funds or about ₹15,938 crore has been largely utilised by these six departments alone. Similarly, other departments have also used funds for infrastructure creation for the general public. Money is being spent on "contract-oriented works" that does not directly contribute to the welfare of SC/STs, sources said.

According to government sources, the money is being allocated and spent by various departments without an understanding of the development gaps that exist between the SC/ST population and the general population. For example, focus should have been on spending money meant for the SC/STs in 109 taluks of the State where their population is more than the State average of 24.1% instead of spreading thin resources across the State, sources said. "It is unfortunate that there has been no deep focus on education, literacy, malnutrition, skill development, and training that would have empowered the downtrodden communities," said president of the Karnataka SC/ST Government Employees Association D. Chandrashekaraiah, underlining the need for targeted schemes.

Planning cell

"There is an urgent requirement for having a planning cell that can monitor works and expenditure in the Social Welfare Department to enable schemes/programmes to reach the targetted audience," he said.

Sources said that the Planning Department has offered the Social Welfare Department help to formulate micro plans at the taluk level and macro plans for the districts and the State that can be monitored closely to achieve developmental goals.

A senior Social Welfare Department official acknowledged the move, and said while it was a welcome step, it would also help bring about transparency in government expenditure.

'Deemed expenditure has been about 7%'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Following demands from various quarters to remove the deemed expenditure clause from the Karnataka Scheduled Castes Sub-Allocation and Tribal Sub-Allocation Act, Social Welfare Minister Kota Srinivas Poojary said the Chief Minister had recently assured Dalit organisation leaders that it would be reviewed.

"There is also a thinking in the Government to review the deemed expenditure clause," he told *The Hindu*. "The Act requires discussion and deemed expenditure can be removed only with an amendment."

Insisting that the deemed expenditure stood at an average 7%, the Minister said that it remained at 7% even during the Congress Government led by Siddaramaiah that brought the Act. "On an average, the deemed expenditure has been around 7% under all Chief Ministers." Further, on Mr. Siddaramaiah's demand for the removal of Section 7 D, Mr. Poojary said, "The Act was brought and followed by the Congress Government. The deemed expenditure continued under his rule. Now, he is insisting on the removal of 7 D."

When his views were sought on demand for a planning cell in his department, the Minister said he was not averse to the idea.

SC decision welcomed

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Scheme Workers' Federation of India, All-India Committee, affiliated to All-India United Trade Union Centre, has welcomed the Supreme Court's decision of entitling all anganwadi workers and helpers for the payment of gratuity.

The SWFI, in a press release, has appealed to the Centre to honour the judgment by taking immediate measures to implement it under the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, for all anganwadi workers and helpers.

I've taken decisive step to resolve deemed forest issue: Chief Minister

He signs Cabinet decision to remove deemed forest tag from 6.5 lakh acres of land

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said he signed a Cabinet decision on Wednesday to release 6.5 lakh acres of land from deemed forest tag and to submit an affidavit in this regard to the Supreme Court to end years of uncertainty of lakhs of farmers.

In an almost launch of the election campaign during the inauguration of the Adalita Soudha at Moodbidri near here, Mr. Bommai said he did not have time to respond to allegations being levelled by the Opposition parties as 24 hours were not enough for him for development works. "Our predecessors have left several issues unresolved, including the deemed forest issue. Now I have signed the decision," Mr. Bommai said.

Generations have been living and engaged in cultivation on land identified as deemed forest and they were subject to harassment by the Forest Department. Similar issues prevailed in Kodagu and other parts of the State. The Government was committed to resolving all the issues, he said.

Listing out a series of Budget announcements, including Raitha Vidyanidhi and grants to fishers, Mr. Bommai reiterated the concept of development and said he would go before people with the development mantra. "I have come to Moodbidri, the Jain Kashi and a centre of education, seeking blessings of people.

His Government, Mr. Bommai claimed, was providing all the necessary infrastructure, including drinking water, good roads, healthcare benefits, and education in Moodbidri. Mr. Bommai said the Prime Minister on Wednesday complimented Karnataka for effective COVID-19 management and adequate health infrastructure creation.

Bommai non-committal on further reducing fuel tax

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who also holds the Finance portfolio, on Wednesday was non-committal on reducing the sales tax on fuel after Prime Minister Narendra Modi took potshots at Opposition-ruled States over high petrol prices.

"We will see. We must see our economy also. Based on that we will decide," Mr. Bommai told the media when he was asked if the State will go for another cut in fuel tax.

Basavaraj Bommai

In November 2021, the State Government reduced sales tax on petrol from 35% to 25.9% and on diesel from 24% to 14.34%. The decision resulted in petrol price dropping by ₹ 13.30 a litre and diesel by ₹19.47 a litre. At present, a litre of petrol costs ₹111.09 and diesel ₹94.79 in Bengaluru.

"Last November, after the Centre cut excise duty, some States followed suit and it benefited citizens in a cooperative federal setup. It will help if other States reduce tax so that neighbouring States are not affected," Mr. Bommai said.

Mr. Modi specifically named Maharashtra, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Jharkhand for not reducing excise duty on fuel since last November.

Congress to bring out manifesto for each Assembly segment

Programme to be launched to identify the needs of people

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Senior leaders of the State Congress held a meeting on Wednesday and proposed to bring out manifestos for each Assembly constituency in the State to address the grievances of the public.

The meeting decided to take forward the party's campaign against the State and Central Government policies, KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar told the media after the meeting.

It was decided to launch a programme at the constituency level to identify the needs of people to prepare manifestos in each Assembly segment, he said.

The meeting discussed various issues related to the strengthening of the party's booth-level committees and party units at the block and taluk levels by involving women, youth, and leaders of farming and SC/ST communities, Mr. Shivakumar said.

Congress leaders Siddaramaiah, D.K. Shivakumar, Randeep Singh Surjewala, and M. Mallikarjun Kharge at a party meeting in Bengaluru on Wednesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Shivakumar, AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly Siddaramaiah, and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha M. Mallikarjun Kharge were among the leaders who attended the meeting.

Newly appointed KPCC vice-presidents and general secretaries participated. The meeting would continue on Thursday.

Issue of encroachment by coffee planters will be resolved: Ashok

Government is planning to bring out a policy, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HASSAN

Revenue Minister R. Ashok has assured coffee planters that the State Government will resolve the issue of encroachment being faced by the planters for decades. The Government was contemplating a policy to allot encroached extent of land on lease to the growers.

"For decades coffee planters have been treated as land grabbers. We are making honest efforts to remove that tag. I am here to listen to your woes and find a solution," he said during an interaction programme with planters here on Wednesday

As per the records, the Minister said, in Hassan district about 30,000 acres had been encroached upon. In Chikkamagaluru district, the extent of land encroached by planters is 45,00 acres. "This has happened over several generations. We will collect details of encroachments by planters and take a decision benefiting those who hold a small extent of land," he said.

Revenue Minister R. Ashok at an interaction with coffee planters in Hassan on Wednesday. • PRAKASH HASSAN

Regarding planters being tried under the Karnataka Land Grabbing Prohibition Act, the Minister said agriculture holdings would be exempted from the purview of the Act.

Minister for Excise K. Gopalaiah, who is Minister in charge of the district, said Kerala had resolved the issue of land encroachment by the planters. Karnataka Government would also take a decision to help the planters. Earlier, Karnataka Growers' Federation president H.T. Mohan Kumar said the existing law had been treating planters as land grabbers. "We don't grab land, but cultivate it. We are cultivators. The Government should stop treating us as land grabbers on the lines of those who grab land in cities," he said.

Department of Health & Family Welfare
KARNATAKA STATE AIDS PREVENTION SOCIETY
Arogya Soudha, 4th Floor, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bangalore - 560 023.
Tel.: 080-2955 7021, e-mail : pdksaps@gmail.com
No: KSAPS/PRC/09/2021-22/Call-2 Date:27.04.2022
Invitation For Short Term Re-tenders through e-Procurement
Short Term re-tenders (Two Covers) are invited for Printing & Supply of ICTC Registers, formats & cards under e-procurement System. Details are available at e-procurement website: https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in
Last date for submission of tender is 12.05.2022 upto 5.30 p.m.
Sd/- Project Director
Karnataka State Aids Prevention Society
DIPR/CP/upgrade Advertising/ 212/2022-23
STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

Office of the Prl. District & Sessions Judge, Bengaluru Rural District, Bengaluru
No.: ADM/132/2021 Date: 22.04.2022
Tender Notification
Tenders in sealed cover superscribed as "**Tender for providing service contract for the Fast Track Special Court-II, Bengaluru Rural District, Bengaluru**" are invited from the reputed Service Providers/Manpower Agencies who are interested to provide Four numbers of Manpower in different cadre i.e., (1) Typist - 02 Nos. (2) Attender - 01 No. (3) Peon-01 No. for maintaining office work of Fast Track Special Court - II, Bengaluru Rural District, Bengaluru, situated at City Civil Court Complex, Bengaluru.
Service Tender shall submit the quotation in the prescribed format. EMD of 5% of the total amount quoted in the prescribed format by way of D.D. in favour of Prl. District & Sessions Judge, Bengaluru Rural District, Bengaluru shall be submitted along with the Tender. The contract will be for a period of three years or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Last date for submission of Tender quotation: **25.05.2022 by 5.30 PM or before.** Date of opening the sealed tender quotation: **28.05.2022 at 10.30 AM** in the chamber of Prl. District & Sessions Judge, Bengaluru Rural District, Bengaluru. Educational Qualification of the personnel and Terms and Conditions of the contract can be obtained by contacting the above office during office hours.
DIPR/DD-C.P/302/MCA/2022-23

Higher standard to pass B Pharma will benefit students to compete globally: HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Observing that a student would benefit in the global professional job market on completing B Pharma course with higher standards fixed for passing the exams by the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, the High Court of Karnataka has rejected a student's plea against reduction in award of grace marks to pass the first year B Pharma exam after he joined the course.

"If the petitioner is allowed to call in question the power of the university for the promulgation of ordinances/notifications altering the criteria for the award of grace marks by making it more rigorous, it will have a deleterious effect on the endeavour of the university to enhance the standard of the students who earn the degree reflecting commensurate proficiency in the domain," the court observed.

Justice P. Krishna Bhat passed the order while holding that the petitioner-student was fully aware at least about three months in advance the standard by which his performance is going to be evaluated and what would be the minimum marks he was required to secure for passing the exams.

The higher benchmark set by the domain experts of the university would make the student, when coming of the institution, to have expertise in the field which is comparable with the students coming out of other institutions elsewhere globally so that he is able to meet the requirements of the professional job market, the court observed.

There is no vested right in the petitioner-student to claim that he should be tested as per the previous notification, which was beneficial to him as it was liberal in awarding grace marks, the court said while pointing out that the new notification fixing higher standard by reducing grace marks was notified by following due process of law.

The petitioner-student had joined the course in January 2021, the new notification prescribing lesser grace marks was issued on February 23, 2021, and he appeared for the first-semester exam in June 2021. He challenged this notification only after he failed in one of the exams. His claim was that his papers should have been evaluated based on the 2019 notification, which had a provision for awarding higher grace marks.

KCR rakes up friction with Governors

'They are working at cross-purposes with elected State governments'

N. RAHUL
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao came down heavily on the gubernatorial system in vogue in the country, in an apparent reference to his strained relationship with the Governor of Telangana.

At the plenary of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) on Wednesday, Mr. Rao cited examples of Governors of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Kerala working at cross-purposes with elected State governments.

In this context, he specifically mentioned the role of Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari in sitting over a file related to the recommendation of the State government on 12 nominees for Legislative Council under the Governor's quota and Tamil Nadu government's Bills empowering the government to scrap NEET for students from the State and empowering the government to appoint Vice-Chancellors for 13 universities.

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekar Rao addressing the plenary of TRS party in Hyderabad on Wednesday. • PTI

He recalled that the Centre had not learnt the lessons from the manner in which a popular government headed by N.T. Rama Rao was overthrown in 1984 but reinstated subsequently following a public uproar. The then Governor Ramlal had met a humiliating experience as he was forced to quit. Over 200 MLAs of Telugu Desam Party had stood solidly behind NTR to testify that the will of people in a democracy prevailed. The Centre was showing scant respect for people's voices.

India needs alternative political agenda: CM

N. RAHUL
HYDERABAD

Giving a new twist to his often-repeated call for emergence of an anti-BJP and anti-Congress alliance of political parties, TRS president and Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao on Wednesday advocated an alternative political agenda for the country, in which his party will play a role.

"It is not friendship between parties nor alternative politics, but a political agenda that is the need of the hour to make the country a super power. I will be happy if Hyderabad becomes a platform for the emergence of such an agenda and rid the country of the religious hatred spread by the BJP rule," Mr. Rao said in his opening remarks at the plenary of TRS to mark its 21st anniversary celebrations in Hyderabad.

In his over one hour address, Mr. Rao also said there was no need of any political front or realignment of political forces to make someone a Prime Minister. What was required was an agenda that the country could set for itself by framing an integrated agricultural policy and reorienting goals of various sectors, including industry, to meet the aspirants of its vast population.

He stressed that the question was not to ensure that a certain party rose to power, but to see that people assumed power in a political process that went on relentlessly.

Ration card issue: SC slams Telangana

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday put the Telangana government in the dock for its "en masse" cancellation of over 19 lakh ration cards, saying getting basic nutrition through the public distribution system (PDS) is a statutory right.

The cards, the court learnt, were cancelled by the State for being "bogus" without giving beneficiaries any prior notice or an opportunity to be heard or without conducting field surveys.

The court directed the Chief Secretary to explain the steps taken before cancellation of the ration cards. The Bench also ordered the State to conduct a field verification of the cancelled card holders and give them an opportunity to make representations of their grievances.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY

TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, central Maharashtra, south Konkan & Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe. Heat wave conditions likely in isolated pockets over Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Vidarbha

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.8	37.0	23.5	Kozhikode	–	37.0	28.4
Ahmedabad	–	44.2	27.0	Kurnool	–	43.4	29.4
Aizawl	–	32.0	19.9	Lucknow	–	43.0	24.6
Allahabad	–	45.0	25.2	Madurai	–	37.7	26.5
Bengaluru	–	35.0	23.7	Mangaluru	–	34.6	27.0
Bhopal	–	–	–	Mumbai	–	37.2	25.4
Bhubaneswar	–	40.3	27.3	Mysuru	–	35.5	22.4
Chandigarh	–	41.3	22.8	New Delhi	–	41.5	22.2
Chennai	–	35.3	28.3	Patna	–	42.8	25.4
Coimbatore	–	36.2	25.4	Port Blair	–	33.4	26.6
Dehradun	–	38.0	20.1	Puducherry	–	35.3	26.4
Gangtok	–	21.9	12.9	Pune	–	41.1	23.6
Goa	–	33.7	26.8	Raipur	–	43.4	27.6
Guwahati	7	31.2	21.0	Ranchi	–	40.6	24.5
Hubballi	–	38.0	24.0	Shillong	6	27.0	12.7
Hyderabad	–	40.4	26.8	Shimla	–	31.1	19.8
Imphal	3	30.9	18.5	Srinagar	–	28.1	10.4
Jaipur	–	42.4	27.0	Thiruvananthapuram	–	33.8	27.1
Kochi	–	34.0	26.4	Tiruchi	–	39.3	27.0
Kohima	5	30.0	13.7	Vijayawada	–	39.6	27.0
Kolkata	–	38.1	28.1	Visakhapatnam	–	36.2	27.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — **Yesterday**

CITIES	SO2	NO2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	11	12	..	231	142	
Bengaluru	..	90	..	65	178	
Chennai	14	7	102	27	40	
Delhi	77	73	42	384	331	
Hyderabad	4	22	42	135	127	
Kolkata	18	22	28	103	109	
Lucknow	15	84	61	340	240	
Mumbai	25	20	96	49	219	
Pune	92	123	118	187	107	
Visakhapatnam	28	43	41	41	104	

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Gurugram, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 353 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Puducherry recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Actors rekindle 'national language' debate

Ajay Devgn and Sudeep spar on Twitter over the status of Hindi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The "national language" debate came back in focus on Wednesday, as Hindi actor Ajay Devgn took to Twitter to react to a comment by Kannada actor Sudeep.

It all began with a statement by Sudeep at an event associated with *KGF Chapter 2*, which has been dubbed into many languages. He is learnt to have said that "Hindi is no more a national language" to indicate the reach of some of the Southern films in recent times.

Actor Ajay Devgn tweeted in Hindi to ask Sudeep why films in his mother tongue were being dubbed in Hindi if it was not a "national language". He insisted that Hindi "was, is, and will always be the national language."

Actors Ajay Devgn and Sudeep.

Sudeep said in response that he could read Devgn's tweet in Hindi because he respected and had learnt the language, but asked what would have been the response if he had tweeted in Kannada. "Don't we too belong to India, sir?" he asked.

This saw a flurry of responses, and among them one by actor Ramya. She wrote, "No, Hindi is not our national language ... Your ignorance is baffling. And it's great that films like *KGF*, *Pushpa* and *RRR* have done so well in the Hindi belt ... art has no language barrier. Please enjoy our films as much as we enjoy yours."

Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah also jumped in with a tweet. "Hindi was never & will never be our National Language. It is the duty of every Indian to respect linguistic diversity of our country. Each language has its own rich history for its people to be proud of. I am proud to be a Kannadiga," he said. Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy also took to Twitter to condemn the "insolence" of Devgn in his tweet. He said the actor was like a spokesperson for "autocratic BJP and its Hindi nationalism".

Sudeep chose to conclude the debate by stating that he would explain the context in which he had made the original statement when they meet in person.

Two children suffocate to death in ice cream freezer

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

A game of hide-and-seek turned tragic for two young girls at Masage village in Nanjangud, near here, when they reportedly died due to suffocation while hiding inside an abandoned ice cream freezer on Wednesday.

Kavya, 5, daughter of Raju Nayaka, and Bhagya, 9, daughter of Nagaraja Nayaka, decided to hide in the ice cream freezer box that had been lying unused near their house.

Children of the neighbourhood often clambered over the freezer box and sat on it while playing. But, on Wednesday, the two girls decided to enter the box and hide themselves during a game of hide-and-seek. Unfortunately, they were locked in and were suffocated to death, the police said. The incident came to light only after the parents started frantically searching for the missing children along with the other villagers.

The parents of the deceased were inconsolable when they found the children dead in the ice cream freezer box. The last rites were completed without bringing the matter to the notice of the police.

A police official said the parents did not want the bodies to be cut open during post-mortem and had carried out the last rites without informing the police.

BusinessLine
THE HINDU GROUP

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Preventing harm

Proactive intervention is needed to stop spread of hate and inflammatory speeches

The value of proactive judicial intervention cannot be understated. After the Supreme Court called for "corrective measures" against the peddling of communal hate from supposedly religious platforms, the authorities in Uttarakhand have prevented the holding of a 'dharam sansad' in Roorkee by imposing prohibitory orders against such gatherings. At a time when communally motivated gatherings are becoming conspicuous in their frequency and vociferous in their fulminations against minorities, one would have expected the police to be more sensitive to the situation and prevent hate speeches. Counsel for Himachal Pradesh has said preventive steps were taken when one such gathering took place a few days ago, and that the participants were warned against any incitement, but those who have approached the Court against the trend of hate speeches at such meets, accuse the local authorities of inaction. It was one such religious conclave in Haridwar in December that witnessed extraordinarily inflammatory speeches being made against Muslims, some of them having a shockingly genocidal tenor. After dithering, the Uttarakhand police had then arrested Yati Narsinghanand, a controversial priest and Hindutva leader, who was among those who had allegedly called for armed violence against minorities. Even after obtaining bail, under a condition that he would not make any provocative speeches, he had participated in a similar event in Delhi. Instances of controversial religious figures making unacceptable comments at different places and occasions have emerged as a disturbing pattern, one that the Court may have to arrest by stern action.

One way of looking at this phenomenon is to dismiss it as not being representative of the silent majority and as the activity of a few fringe elements. However, it cannot be gainsaid that the provocateurs are seeking to foster a collective fear among the majority that their interests are not being protected by an allegedly minority-friendly Constitution, and feeding off the same fear to spread their message of hate. The possible damage to the social fabric is incalculable, as the language of hatred may seep into the public consciousness as an acceptable thought process. The result may be an atmosphere in which communal harmony and public tranquillity will be at perennial risk. It is in this backdrop that modern democracies make a clear distinction between freedom of expression and speech that tends to incite hatred against a public group or section of society. The Supreme Court has recognised the potential for a wider societal impact beyond the distress caused to individual members of the targeted group. In cases relating to lynching and 'khap panchayats', the Court laid down guidelines on preventive, remedial and punitive measures. While these are to be followed without exceptions, there is also a need for considering new criminal and penal provisions to combat hate speech.

The blueprint

Internal elections will be key to the Congress's revival as an alternative to the BJP

The beleaguered Congress has been trying to find ways to get out of the rut that it has got itself into after a series of electoral debacles in the last decade. Its inability to project a cohesive, decisive and vibrant leadership ever since it lost power at the Centre has certainly played a role in this, but attempts at revitalisation have focused more on quickly regaining electoral viability than on addressing serious structural issues. Prashant Kishor, the much sought-after election strategist who has successfully advised several parties on how to leverage new media tools, messaging and promotion of leaders, might not have joined the Congress, but his diagnosis of what ails the party is not without merit. Beginning after Independence as the flag bearer of secularism, social democracy, scientific temper, planned development and strategic autonomy on global matters, the party managed to retain its primacy for decades because of the legitimacy of its leadership that played a central role in the freedom movement and who articulated these values clearly during their struggles. Dissension within and discontent against the party on the issue of authoritarianism (the Emergency), the post-Mandal rise of OBC-based parties, and the gradual federalisation of India's polity led to its decline. Soon it was bested by the rise of the religious right, which managed the politics of caste arithmetic far better in the Hindi heartland and western India and thrived because of the strong presence of a cadre-based force, besides a decisive leadership, articulating its ideology and agenda.

The lack of a structured cadre base that could trumpet the Congress's legacy and achievements is a severe weakness. But the inability to state ideological positions and values clearly is another disadvantage – by seeking to remain a big tent of ideas, the Congress has in the past been numbed into vapid centrism or taken recourse to opportunist use of non-secular values seeing its effect in the rise of the BJP. There is no magic bullet for these weaknesses, but it would not hurt to kindle internal democracy to reconstitute the party's leadership at various levels. Thoroughgoing elections as a procedure should rev up the party's organisation, clarify what it truly stands for – based on its founding principles and how its sympathisers and members articulate them during the electoral process – and also bring about a decisive leadership that will legitimately claim the position based on the results of the elections rather than familial legacy. This exercise should enable it to later engage with like-minded political forces (many parties that were formed after splintering from the parent Congress) and face the electorate with better cohesion.

Building back to avert a learning catastrophe

Governments and schools must focus on the most important priority in school education — learning recovery

CHANDRAKANT LAHARIYA

The COVID-19 pandemic has unarguably emerged as the biggest disruption in the field of school education in the last 100 years. It would take many more months before the medium- and long-term impact of school closure is fully comprehended. A joint report by UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, 'The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery', released in early December 2021 had estimated that in the first 21 months of the pandemic, schools in countries around the world were either partially or fully closed for an average of 224 days. During the same period, schools in Indian States were closed for physical classes, for almost twice the duration, i.e., between 450 days to 480 days. Since the publication of this report, the Omicron variant (B.1.1.529) of the SARS-CoV-2-led surge globally, and the resultant third wave of COVID-19 in India further delayed the re-opening of schools. By March or early April 2022, when re-opened, schools in India had cumulatively closed for physical classes for around 570 days to 600 days – one of the longest school closures in the world.

COVID-19 will linger

However, just when schools, parents and children have begun getting accustomed to regular offline classes, there are reports of an uptick in COVID-19 cases in Indian States including a few cases of children testing COVID-19 positive. This has again whipped up the demand from some sections of parents to move back to hybrid classes. There have been suggestions for the partial closure of schools or even temporary but full closure of schools, if there are a few cases of COVID-19 in a school. In fact, a few private schools have even moved to the hybrid mode.

This demand for shifting to hybrid mode or that of partial closure with every single case in schoolchildren is not scientifically supported and could prove a big threat to school education in India. The reason is simple. SARS-CoV-2 will stay with humanity in the months and years to follow. COVID-19 cases are likely to be reported from all settings – including among schoolchildren – with an unpredictable rise and fall. Therefore, it is impractical, unnecessary, unscientific and unethical to even consider an 'open and shut' mode for schools.

Adverse outcomes are low

Children are a part of family and society; therefore, when COVID-19 cases are being reported in a community, children are also likely to test positive. However, two years into the pandemic, what is proven is that while children do get SARS-CoV-2 infection at the same rate as adults, the probability of adverse outcome of moderate to severe disease is very low.

The news of children being detected COVID-19 positive is drawing more media attention after school re-opening. However, there is no evidence that children have contracted the infection in schools. In most cases, they are more likely to have got the infection from family members. In fact, even before schools were re-opened, successive seroprevalence-surveys across Indian States have reported that nearly 70% to 90% of all children had already got infection (thus protected).

Twenty-five months into the pandemic, the SARS-CoV-2 infection is not an immediate concern; what matters is the outcome of that infection. Most healthy children do not develop severe outcomes, a situation which has not altered even with the emergence of newer variants of concern. In the foreseeable period – possibly for many months – COVID-19 cases would not be zero in any age group – this includes schoolchildren.

Therefore, it is time that we, as a society, stop worrying about children contracting COVID-19 infection. The hybrid mode of learning or partial closure of schools are not the options any more. Rather, the focus has to be on how to keep schools fully open.

GETTY IMAGES

What the challenge is

The recurring discourse on whether to move to hybrid classes or when to close schools is proving a big distraction from more pressing challenges in school education, namely, 'the learning loss'. It is time we plan and act to ensure learning recovery.

First, the re-opening of schools does not mean that all children have begun returning to school. It is time the Education Departments in every State lead the process so as to ensure that every school in every district ensures that no child has dropped out from the education system, and that every eligible child is enrolled. Special attention is needed for the enrolment of all children and girls, especially poor, backward, rural, urban slum-dwellers. Children who are eligible for admission in nursery or classes one and two will need special attention. This would be a key step in tackling pandemic-related enrolment inequities.

Second, the learning loss during the last two years is humongous and 'learning recovery' should be the priority of every State government. There has to be focus on the need to assess the learning level of children and then strategise for learning recovery. It is also time to consider consolidating the curriculum and increasing teaching time. To ensure the success of such efforts, school teachers will need support and the training to accommodate the learning levels and needs of children. The mentor teacher initiatives in government schools in Delhi is proof of the potential of what can be achieved if teachers are supported well. Across India, in both government and private schools, we have very motivated teachers who can contribute to the process. It is time to support teachers. Innovative approaches and the participation of civil society organisations working in the field of education need to be explored.

Increase allocations

Third, looking at the pandemic in the 'rear view mirror', it is time that every Indian State re-assesses the challenges in school education. Subject experts must examine the recommendations made in the National Education Policy 2020 in context of pandemic-related challenges, and fresh operational strategies must be developed and implemented in an accelerated manner. All of this would require additional government investment. In India, government spending on education accounts for about 3% of GDP, which is almost half the average for the education spending of low- and middle-income countries. The time has come for both the Union and State governments in India to increase financial allocation for school education.

Fourth, there are studies and reports that mental health issues and needs in school-age children have doubled in the pandemic period. This calls for making provision for mental health services and counselling sessions for the school-age children. The Education and Health Departments in Indian States need to work together to ensure regular services such as school health, mental health as well as a health check-up for schoolchildren. In early March 2022, 20 school health clinics were opened in Delhi and every State needs to start similar initiatives to strengthen school health services. These initiatives should lay the foundation for more comprehensive approaches such as 'health promoting schools'.

Fifth, mid-day meal services have resumed after a gap of two years. There are 12 crore children in India whose nutritional status is dependent on these school meals. Any disruption in the supply of school meals also means a lack of sufficient nutrition for these children, and thus their weakened immunity and higher susceptibility to various infections. The supplementary nutrition programme in schools will essentially ensure that children remain protected from the severe outcome of COVID-19. In addition, learning from the pandemic, hand washing with soap and water and toilet facilities should be improved in every school, especially in rural and government schools. This will also prepare schools in preventing the possible spread of COVID-19 and also reduce other water-borne illnesses in school-age children. The role of both hygiene and nutrition in better learning has been proven for a long time.

Social, moral responsibility

It is time to recognise that the risk of COVID-19 in children is very low, and far lower than other prevalent health concerns such as dengue, malaria and typhoid, and that the benefit of in-person education is far greater than any risk. Real learning does not happen in the four walls of homes or through online classes but it happens when teachers and other children are in school. Studies have shown that every month of school closure results in the loss of learning ability lags by two months. By that calculation, the learning of children in India has gone back by almost three years. So now that schools are reopening, we cannot start as if nothing has happened. We cannot be distracted, unnecessarily and repeatedly, by unscientific demands to move to hybrid mode or consider any form of temporary closure again .

Realising the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Government needs to take every necessary step to bring school education back on track and develop a road map for learning recovery. Governments, parents, communities and schools need to work together. It is our moral and social responsibility towards the future of this nation.

Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya is a primary-care physician, public policy and health systems specialist, and an epidemiologist based in New Delhi

Hard truths from the rubble of communal conflagrations

Those who claim to be an alternative to the right must have clarity about citizen's rights and duties of a public servant

SHAIKH MUJIBUR REHMAN

The spate of riots that erupted around the recently held Ram Navami festival and Hanuman Jayanti in States such as Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan and in Delhi's Jahangirpuri seem to be have begun a new chapter in Hindu-Muslim violence. The last time such a cycle of Hindu-Muslim violence erupted simultaneously in so many States was after the Babri Masjid demolition on December 6, 1992. While the demolition of the Babri Masjid triggered riots in various parts of India that year, no such singular tragic event could be attributed to the current cycle of violence, indicating a radical shift in not just inter-faith relations at the societal level but also in State-community relations.

In recent events, the demolition drive after the violence saw, for example, the use of a bulldozer in Jahangirpuri; the entrance of its local Jama Masjid was damaged. Thus, from the Babri Masjid's destruction to the demolition of a part of Jahangirpuri's Jama Masjid this year, it has been a full circle in the right's approach to the Hindu-Muslim issue. Between 1992 to 2022, the Hindu right's politics seems have etched the word 'demolition' in the journey of Muslim identity in modern India. At the time of the Babri Masjid's demolition in 1992, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-governed four States: Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh; and these governments were dismissed by the P.V. Narasimha Rao government of the Congress after the demolition.

Some commentators who questioned these dismissals tried to justify the secular credentials of these BJP governments by citing the absence of riots in these States. But these days, such claims about BJP-ruled States cannot be made. Instead, according to reports, riots may be engineered to perpetuate polarisation even in non-BJP ruled States, with Muslim victims presented as perpetrators.

Almost 'standard practice'

In the present instance, the Supreme Court of India has intervened, fortunately, and has made sharp observations about the use of a bulldozer in Jahangirpuri. But the point is that the use of the bulldozer as a 'solution' to rioting has emerged as standard practice in several BJP-governed States. While Uttar Pradesh is the first State in India to use the bulldozer as an extra-judicial weapon, other States such as Madhya Pradesh (in the instance of violence in Khargone) and Gujarat (in the violence in Sabarkantha) too have justified it as the final solution. Riots are not specific to India, and happen even in developed countries, for example, race riots in America. But in no other country does the state deploy bulldozers as a solution.

GETTY IMAGES

A questioning of belonging

In Jahangirpuri, for example, BJP leaders have brought in the 'presence' of Rohingya and Bangladeshi refugees as a factor, as if their clusters are integral to all Muslim neighbourhoods. Like all ideological movements, the right seems to use invented facts in a reckless manner to promote its ideological propaganda. By virtue of this, the right has been able to present Indian Muslims – one of the most deprived communities in modern India – as the most pampered one in public perception using the allegation of appeasement over the years. By bringing 'Rohingya and Bangladeshi refugees' into the conversation, the right seeks to question the legitimacy of Muslim belonging. With the fact of there being no historical right to homeland, the 'right to home' evaporates. Hence the use of the bulldozer becomes the most apt intervention.

Neither riot nor religious procession is new in India. What is new, however – and as the media reports – is the use of incendiary slogans that are meant to hurt the Muslim community, and resorting to aggressive acts such as the display of swords in order to try and provoke retaliation, thereby leading to riots. While further inquiry would lead to the discovery of more facts that have led to or aggravated the violence, the truth is that there is a deliberate attempt to change the nature of what are purely religious processions, thus marking the deeper penetration of a Hindutva ideology into otherwise routine religious life.

Change in state's approach

On Hindu-Muslim violence in India, there is robust scholarship by scholars of various disciplines. Here, there are two observations on which there is consensus: first, Muslims suffer disproportionately in terms of loss in lives and livelihood in riots. Second, the main cause for communal violence is most often trivial. What has changed now is that communal violence can occur even without there being a trivial reason. What is even more intriguing now is the difference in the state's approach to grappling with riots and post-riot situations as opposed to a pre-majoritarian moment in Indian politics. In the past (particularly under the so-called secular regimes), the general approach applied to handling post-riot situations included the setting up of a judicial investigation; compensation for victims; a visit by leaders such as Chief Ministers or even the Prime Minister to the violence-hit neighbourhoods. For example, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Muzaffarnagar after the violence in 2013.

On the other hand, after the Jahangirpuri incident, the Delhi Chief Minister, like leaders in the BJP, has chosen not to visit. It has been argued that by doing so, the Chief Minister has 'smartly avoided' falling into the BJP-laid trap in this atmosphere of toxic communal politics. But the fact is by doing so, the Delhi Chief Minister has only internalised the fear of the Hindutva narrative and has sub-consciously trapped himself on the BJP's terms. Any ideological politics requires clarity over convictions and fearlessness in its execution. Therefore, it is futile to claim to represent an alternative to the right today without having clarity over citizen's rights and a confidence to perform the solemn duties of a public servant.

Shaikh Mujibur Rehman teaches at the Jamia Millia Central University, New Delhi. He is the author of the forthcoming book, 'Shikwa-e-Hind: The Political Future of Indian Muslims'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Court on hate

It is reassuring that the Supreme Court of India has cracked the whip, asking two States to act against the spread of communal hatred (Page 1, April 27). Vitriolic speeches on a raft of sensitive issues by fanatics, communal elements, religious bigots and others have assumed menacing proportions across the country. There is also tacit support by some political parties and entities with dubious credentials, emboldening them to violate the rule of law with impunity. The government at the Centre and in the States should wake up to the reality. Polarising society for selfish ends will only end in disaster.

V. JOHAN DHANAKUMAR,
Chennai

■ The blanket silence of the Centre and the absence of any punitive action so far by some State governments have emboldened those who are spreading hate. Religious or political leaders who indulge in a game of pitting one community against the other are not followers of any 'dharam'. There is a need for intelligence-led policing to round up the offenders. The dictum, "prevention is better than cure", applies to the task of dealing with hate crimes and communal hate.

N. RAMA RAO,
Chennai

Offer declined

At last the Congress party is not going to become a Congress (I-Pac) party (Inside pages, April 27). The grand old party cannot outsource its reins to the strategist and wait for the results, while Prashant Kishor cannot afford to lose his political business and brand value by sticking to only one party. The Congress party must know that it does not need any superhero to rescue it from a self-created mess. It only needs a dedicated ground-level worker who needs clear directions from a committed and trusted leader. Both should go to the people after proper homework. There is no use in wasting time in searching for quick fixes or depending on tips from external sources. The party should rise on its own anyway.

Dr. D.V.G. SANKARARAO,
Nellimarla, Andhra Pradesh

The French election

The victory of the incumbent French President was a foregone conclusion, and the only factor worth tracking was the difference in the victory margin. Two interesting features of the French election emerge: in the first, Marine Le Pen accepted her defeat with humility. Second during the course of the electioneering, each party did strive to co-opt voters by way of reasonable and achievable manifestos . This is a textbook case of how elections are contested in a democracy. Hopefully, this triumph shall provide more adrenaline rush and Emmanuel Macron will live up to the billing of voters.

DEEPAK SINGHAL,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Energy independence through hydrogen

It can help lay the foundation of a new India which aims to be a global climate leader

RAMIT KALIA & USHA SURESH

Hydrogen could completely transform India's energy ecosystem • GETTY IMAGES

India's Green Hydrogen Policy released on February 17, 2022 has addressed several critical challenges such as open access, waiver of inter-state transmission charges, banking, time-bound clearances, etc., and is expected to further boost India's energy transition.

India's per capita energy consumption is about one-third of the global average and one-twelfth of the U.S. Increasing growth and economic prosperity would significantly increase India's energy appetite furthering import dependence. This, coupled with volatility in prices, as seen during the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the roller-coaster ride of energy prices from historic lows in 2020 to record highs in 2021, could pose a serious threat to our energy security, accentuating an unequivocal need to strive for energy independence.

The new age fuel, hydrogen, is touted as India's gateway to energy independence. Hydrogen has a multifaceted role to play in the futuristic energy landscape, be it energy storage, long-haul transport, or decarbonisation of the industrial sector.

In the long run, two envisioned prominent fuels are hydrogen and electricity. Though both are energy vectors, hydrogen can be stored on a large scale and for a longer duration explicitly affirming its huge potential to become a great balancer to the ever-increasing supply of variable renewable energy. It will complement and accelerate renewables into India's clean energy transition, thereby supporting India's ambitious plan to achieve 500 GW renewable capacity by 2030.

Hydrogen: a game-changer

Hydrogen has a major role to play in the decarbonisation of India's transport sector. The advantages of fuel cell vehicles over battery electric vehicles are faster fuelling and long-driving range thereby making them ideal for long-haul transportation which is a major constraint with Li-Ion batteries. In the industrial segment, hydrogen can de-carbonise 'hard-to-abate' sectors such as iron and steel, aluminium, copper etc. It is a huge prospect to produce fuels such as methanol, synthetic kerosene and green ammonia.

India's hydrogen consumption was around 7 Mt in 2020 and according to The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), it is anticipated to leapfrog to about 28 Mt in 2050. Assuming 25% export capacity, we can expect a requirement of 35 Mt by 2050. On the basis of this assumption, we can calculate that India would require a tentative capacity in the range of 192 GW to 224 GW of electrolysers by 2050, assuming all of it is green hydrogen.

The global capacity of electrolysers has just crossed 300 MW in 2021. This signifies that India itself would require an electrolyser capacity of 640 to 750 times the current global capacity, by 2050.

This would entail an exponential increase in electricity demand of around 1,500 to 1,800 TWh, implying that just for hydrogen production; India would require 110-130% of its current total electricity generation (2020-21) by 2050. Therefore, a road map for rapid growth in demand for electricity, especially from renewables should be prepared.

Apart from the ever-increasing electricity demand, the high cost of hydrogen manufacturing and water scarcity could also pose a challenge. Production of 1 kg of hydrogen by electrolysis requires around nine litres of water. Therefore, hydrogen project planning should be holistic and targeted in areas that are not water-scarce.

Creating a hydrogen economy is a chicken and egg problem as consumers seek lower costs which could be possible with scalability and large investments, but for those, producers seek assured demand. Hydrogen fulfils the three Es of India's energy road map – energy security, energy sustainability and energy access – and India should strive to seize one more E, viz. economic opportunity so that industry can be encouraged to its full potential.

Five-step strategy

On the demand side, a five-step strategy should be devised. Firstly, to create an initial demand, a mandate should be given to mature industries such as refining and fertilisers, with adequate incentives. Secondly, industries manufacturing low emission hydrogen-based products inter alia green steel and green cement need to be incentivised by government policies. Thirdly, blending hydrogen with natural gas can act as a big booster shot which can be facilitated by framing blending mandates, regulations and promoting H-CNG stations. Further, to promote FCEVs, hydrogen fuel stations may be planned on dedicated corridors where long-distance trucking is widespread. Lastly, the concept of carbon tariffs needs to be introduced on the lines of European countries.

On the supply side too, a five-step strategy should be devised. Firstly, investment in R&D should be accelerated to bring its cost at par with fossils. Secondly, Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) scheme with a target to produce 15 MMT of compressed biogas could be leveraged by exploring biogas conversion into hydrogen. Thirdly, to commercialise and scale-up nascent technologies, a Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme may be introduced for hydrogen-based projects. Further, to secure affordable financing, electrolyser manufacturing and hydrogen projects need to be brought under Priority Sector Lending (PSL). Lastly, since two dominant cost factors for green hydrogen are renewable energy tariffs & electrolyser costs, and India has the advantage of one of the lowest renewable tariffs; the thrust should be on reducing the cost of electrolysers by implementing the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. This could help India become a global hub for electrolyser manufacturing and green hydrogen.

On the transportation front, ammonia, having high energy density could be promoted as a mode of transportation. A hydrogen transportation system could also be built on the foundation created for natural gas by using its existing infrastructure. Additionally, hydrogen transportation projects may be integrated with PM Gati Shakti Master Plan.

Hydrogen could completely transform India's energy ecosystem by shifting its trajectory from an energy importer to a dominant exporter over the next few decades. India could export to projected future import centres like Japan, South Korea, etc.

With hydrogen, India could lead the world in achieving Paris Agreement's goal to limit global warming to 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels. Hydrogen could lay the foundation of a new India which would be energy-independent; a global climate leader and international energy power.

In COP 26, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given a clarion call of *panchamrit* (five goals), with an ambitious target to achieve Net Zero by 2070. Hydrogen will certainly play a decisive role in India's Net Zero ambition and in making India 'Aatmanirbhar in energy'.

Ramit Kalia is Manager, Engineers India Limited. Usha Suresh is Former Senior Economic Adviser, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

Social dialogue for safe workplaces

The OSH code calls for committees for workers' safety

DAGMAR WALTER

With over six million people dying due to COVID-19 in the last two years, safety and health have become central to every local, national, and international discussion. As accidents, injuries, and diseases are prevalent in many industries, all of which directly and indirectly affect workers' and their families' well-being, it makes ensuring a preventative safety and health culture a critical component of any workplace. Globally, an estimated 2.9 million deaths and 402 million non-fatal injuries are attributed to occupational accidents and diseases. For the world of work to build forward from the pandemic in a more human-centred and resilient way, occupational safety and health (OSH) mechanisms need to be strengthened to establish workplaces that are not hazardous for workers.

Since 2003, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has commemorated April 28 as World Day for Safety and Health at Work to stress the prevention of accidents and diseases at work by capitalising on our strength of tripartism and social dialogue. Our new publication, "Enhancing social dialogue towards a culture of safety and health," and this year's theme, "Act together to build a positive safety and health culture", explores the role of social dialogue in creating a positive safety and health culture at workplaces, which will be made possible by cooperation and discussions between employers and workers.

Implementation of OSH code

Occupational accidents and diseases cost 5.4% of the global GDP annually. While less tangibly, they materialise as presenteeism (working with less effectiveness), productivity losses associated with permanent impairment, and staff-turnover costs (i.e., loss of skilled staff). The Government of India declared the National Policy on Safety, Health and Environment at Workplace in February 2009 and compiled the available OSH information as National OSH Profile in 2018. The next important step is launching a strategic National OSH Programme. Effective implementation of the code of OSH and working conditions of 2020 is expected to extend OSH protection to more sectors, especially to informal workers who make up nearly 90% of India's workforce, and provide fair and effective labour inspections, as labour inspection visits dropped from 1,21,757 in 2011 to 93,846 in 2016. The code should also promote active workplace OSH committees.

At the national level, the government needs to include all relevant ministries to ensure that workers' safety and health are prioritised in the national agenda. This requires allocating adequate resources to increase general awareness around OSH, knowledge of hazards and risks, and an understanding of their control and prevention measures. At the state level, workers' and employers' organisations, by way of bilateral discussions, must incorporate safety and health training at every level of their supply chains to ensure protection from workplace injuries and diseases. Social dialogue is essential for improving compliance and plays a vital role in building ownership and instilling commitment, which paves the way for the rapid and effective implementation of OSH policies.

OSH coverage across India

India has some good practices for extending OSH coverage. The Government of Uttar Pradesh, in cooperation with employers and workers, carried out participatory OSH training workshops for metal and garment home-based workers. Most of these workers are in the informal economy and remain unreachable by other occupational health and safety initiatives. The Government of Kerala applied the ILO's participatory OSH training methodologies and reached out to small construction sites for OSH improvements. The Government of Rajasthan generated OSH awareness among workers and employers in stone processing units for preventing occupational lung diseases.

A reliable occupational accident and disease reporting system is vital for remedying victims and making effective prevention policies for safer and healthier workplaces. While India has such a mechanism, it is underutilised, with many injuries, accidents, and diseases going unregistered. The lack of awareness of health hazards at workplaces leads to misdiagnosis by doctors. Corrective action entails training doctors on the various occupational diseases and workplace hazards and risks.

Occupational injuries and illnesses cause immeasurable suffering and loss to victims and their families. Moreover, they also entail economic losses for enterprises and economies. Therefore, strong social dialogue mechanisms for appropriately addressing occupational safety and health, by adequately investing in its prevention, will contribute to building a safe and healthy workforce and support productive enterprises, which form the bedrock of a sustainable economy.

Dagmar Walter is Director, ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team for South Asia and Country Office for India, part of UN Team India

STATE OF PLAY

An early poll mood has set in

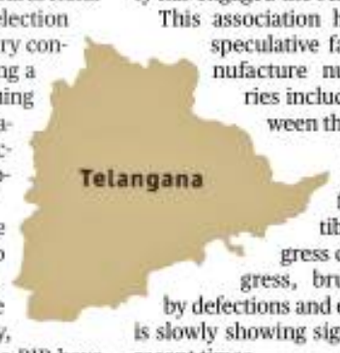
The arrival of Prashant Kishor in Telangana has changed the contours of political equations

R. RAVIKANTH REDDY

Telangana's political space is now abuzz with activity, thanks to the diverse strategies being tried out by the three major political parties – the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The spurt in political activity, planned or part of a long-drawn political process, has set the election season into motion though Assembly polls are 18 months away.

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is keeping the early election lamp burning through every conceivable action, announcing a slew of schemes and issuing long-pending job notifications to pacify several sections that he feels are slipping out of his control.



Opposition parties have stepped on the gas too creating a confrontative atmosphere to keep up the momentum. Undoubtedly, both the Congress and the BJP have injected the idea of early polls into people's minds irrespective of the reality.

The Congress, which was warming up, has now got into battle mode as it plans to conduct its biggest ever meeting – farmers' struggle meet – in Warangal on May 6 involving Rahul Gandhi. The visit is expected to spur political activity further and set the tone for a full-fledged battle.

The BJP is not far behind. It is in high spirits with its recent win in the Huzurabad bypoll where Eatala Rajender, once the right-hand man of Mr. Rao, defeated the TRS.

The State BJP chief Bandi Sanjay's Praja Sangrama Yatra, a walkathon covering the entire State, showcases the party's urgency to join the early elections battle or get ready for the plunge when the situation demands. The BJP too, like the Congress, is banking largely on the 'anti-incumbency' against the two terms of TRS rule.

But the sudden entry of political strategist Prashant Kishor into Telangana just changed the contours of politics and political equations. Even as he engages Congress at the national level to cobble up an anti-BJP front, the organisation Mr. Kishor was earlier associated with, the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) has simultaneously agreed to work with the TRS in Telangana where the Congress is its bitter rival.

Mr. Kishor himself had marathon meetings with Mr. Rao and other TRS leaders. The TRS working president and Mr. Rao's son, K.T. Rama Rao, has officially confirmed that the party has engaged the services of I-PAC.

This association has set off the speculative factories to manufacture numerous theories including a pact between the Congress and the TRS, unimaginable so far and indigestible for the Congress cadre. The Congress, brutally battered by defections and electoral losses, is slowly showing signs of revival in recent times.

But it is now engulfed in chaos and confusion down the line, though the AICC in-charge of Telangana Congress, Manickam Tagore categorically rejected the possibility of an electoral tie-up with the TRS.

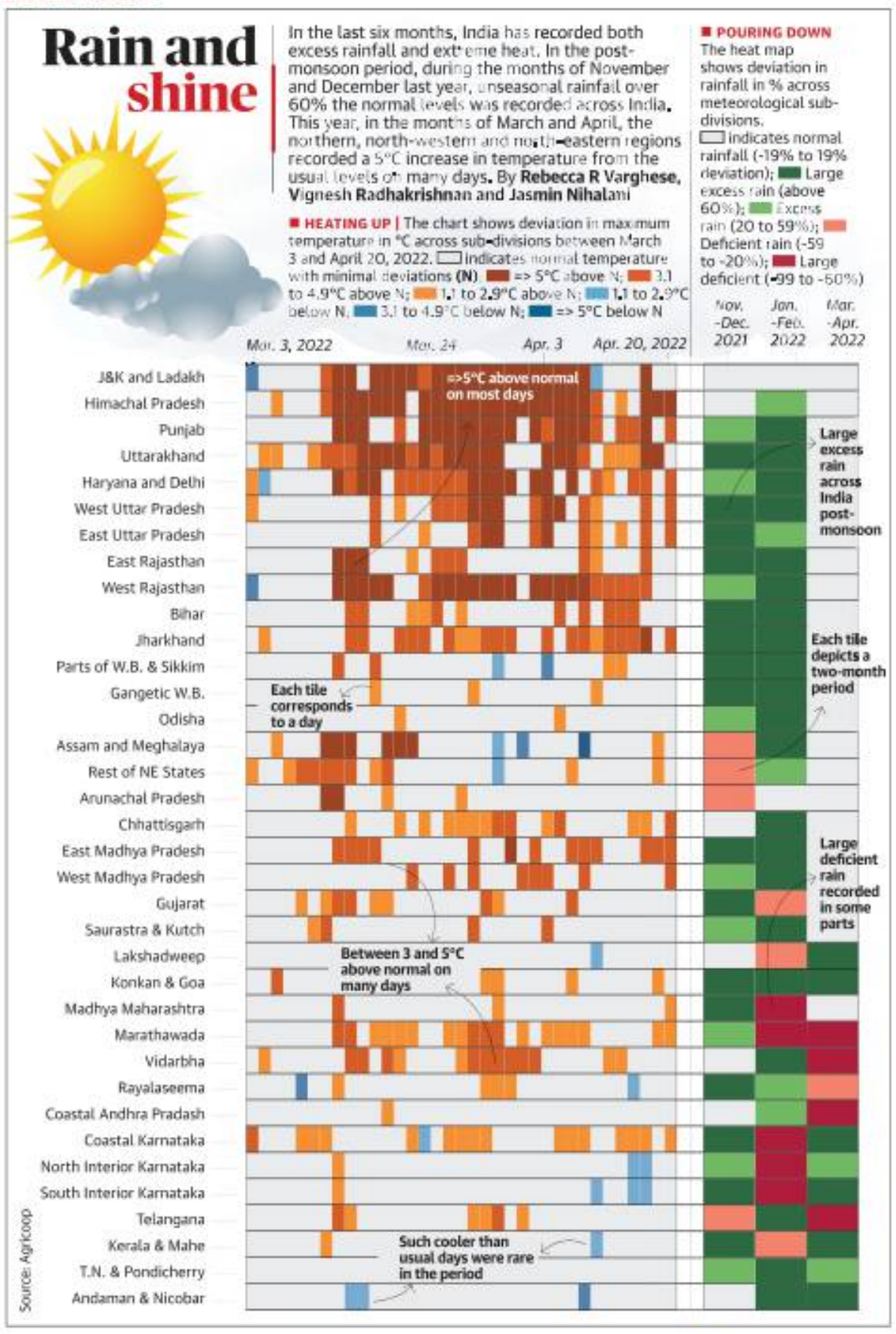
As the Congress leadership wades through these uncertain tidal waves hitting them hard in the form of Prashant Kishor, the BJP is happy.

It is already spinning theories around it while the Congress is trying hard to dismiss them. Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) chief A. Revanth Reddy is repeatedly rejecting this theory to keep the cadre's spirit up, citing that Prashant Kishor, in his report to the Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, has not mentioned any tie-up with TRS in Telangana, though he suggested similar association in other States.

An interesting political scenario is unfolding in Telangana with the entry of one man, and that too much before he has even started his work.

ravikanth.ramasayam@thehindu.co.in

DATA POINT



The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 28, 1972

Nixon's decision on Vietnam

Washington, April 27: President Nixon last night said that the Vietnamisation programme has proved itself sufficiently for him to continue with the programme of withdrawing American forces from South Vietnam. In his televised address to the nation on Vietnam, Mr. Nixon announced three decisions. One, withdraw over the next two months 20,000 more Americans from Vietnam, reducing the total force there to 49,000 men by July 1. Two, resume the Paris talks with the firm expectation that productive talks leading to rapid progress would follow and three, order continuance of U.S air and naval attacks on military installations in North Vietnam until it stops its offensive in South Vietnam. Mr. Nixon said his decisions were based on the prediction of General Abrams, U.S. Commander in Vietnam, that there would be several more weeks of very hard fighting in which some battles would be lost and others would be won by the South Vietnamese. "But if we continue to provide air and sea support, the enemy will fail in its desperate gamble to impose a communist regime on South Vietnam and the South Vietnamese will then have demonstrated their ability to defend themselves on the ground against future enemy attacks," General Abrams was quoted as saying.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 28, 1922

The co-operative movement

Time and again, it has been repeatedly declared in the press and the platform that the Co-operative movement finds little headway into the villages. If at all any sign is visible, it is under credit societies and especially in towns when there is a large middle class verging on the side of want and necessity. Even in this, the benefit is not very much appreciated, as an applicant will have to wait his turn and in many cases, the turn comes always late. While such is the case with town societies, one can fairly conclude that the results of credit societies in rural areas, are always negative in result. As one moving about, I can assert with some plainness that even to-day in villages, the local sowcars and the small monied people rule, as people do not mind extra interest out of their necessity to meet payment in time. Mr. Vedachallaiyer, in his presidential address in the recent Madura, Ramnad Co-operative Conference deplored the apathy of the masses and the poor response of co-operative spirit in its proper intensity in rural areas.

FROM PAGE ONE

'States not passing on fuel duty cut to people'

The Prime Minister said that in an effort to reduce the fuel prices, the Central government has reduced the excise duty and had requested the States also to do so. Some States reduced taxes but some did not pass on the benefits to the people, leading to higher fuel prices there.

The Prime Minister said 42% of the revenue at the Centre goes to the State governments. "I urge all the States to work as a team in this time of global crisis following the spirit of cooperative federalism."

On the recent increase in COVID-19 cases in some States and about the need to follow test, track, treat, vaccination and ensure appropriate behaviour, the PM said the pandemic challenge is not fully over.

He said that it is a matter of pride that 96% adult population is vaccinated with at least one dose and about 84% people above 15 years of age have received both the doses.

The Prime Minister emphasised on the need to test serious influenza cases and genome sequencing of the positive cases, Covid appropriate behaviour and avoid panic. He also emphasised on continued upgradation of health infrastructure and medical manpower.

The Prime Minister pointed out that with increasing temperature, fire incidents in forests and buildings are increasing. He specially asked for the fire safety audits of the hospitals. He said our arrangements for meeting this challenge should be comprehensive and response time should be the minimum.

Why can't Perarivalan be released: Supreme Court

"If at all the Governor disagrees with the State Cabinet decision to release him, the proper course for him would be to refer it back to the Cabinet and not forward it to the President, who is bound by the aid and advice of the Centre... That cannot simply be done. We *prima facie* find the Governor's action wrong and you are arguing against the Constitution," Justice L. Nageswara Rao addressed Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj, appearing for the Centre.

Justice B.R. Gavai, on the Bench said the Constitution would have to be "rewritten" if the Centre's argument was accepted that in "certain situations" the Governor could refer matters under Article 161 (Governor's power of mercy) to the President.

The Council of Ministers of the Government of Tamil Nadu recommended Perarivalan's release on September 9, 2018.

"Article 161 is an executive power. Reserving a mercy plea for the President's assent is not contemplated at all," the senior advocate argued for the State.

Perarivalan has argued that he had been "under the hangman's noose" for years. He had suffered the pain and trauma of the death row syndrome. "The pain was equally felt by the ageing and fragile parents due to the uncertainty between life and death, and hope and despair," he had submitted.

The court scheduled the next hearing on Wednesday.

11 die as chariot touches live wire

It was pulled along the narrow streets of the hamlet by people across age groups from the Appar Madam [a religious prayer hall] located on Thanjavur-Budalur Road.

The hall is being maintained by a committee of local people and a three-day *guru puja* festival is organised every year starting from the *Thirunakshatram* [birth star] of Saivaite saint Thirunavukkarasu Nayanar. This year, the *guru puja* commenced on April 26.

The chariot was taken along the narrow streets without difficulty.

Around 3 a.m. on Wednesday when it reached the border of the village, people pulling the chariot attempted to take a U-turn on the main road to bring back the cart to the 'Appar Madam' when it came into contact with high-tension overhead traction.

Almost all the people pulling the chariot were thrown off due to electric shock, and others who rushed in to save them also felt the shock as the road was damp with water that people poured to receive the chariot.

The injured were rushed to the Thanjavur Medical College Hospital and were treated for burns and injuries.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin visited the injured in hospital and paid respects to the deceased, consoling their families. He handed over a cheque for ₹5 lakh each to the kin of the deceased. Those who are severely injured will be given ₹1 lakh, and ₹50,000 will be paid to those who suffered injuries.

SC fixes final sedition hearing on May 5

Several petitions have been filed challenging the colonial law and highlighting the freedom of the Press.

The petitioners include senior journalists like Patricia Mukhim and Anuradha Bhasin, cartoonist Aseem Trivedi, and one separately by the Editors Guild of India, NGO Common Cause, former Minister Arun Shourie and prominent citizens like Major General S.G. Vombatkere (retd).

"Sedition is a colonial law. It suppresses freedoms. It was used against Mahatma Gandhi, Tilak... Is this law necessary after 75 years of Independence?" Chief Justice Ramana, heading a three-judge Bench, had orally addressed Mr. Venugopal and Mr. Mehta.

The CJI had said sedition or Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code was prone to misuse by the government. "The use of sedition is like giving a saw to the carpenter to cut a piece of wood and he uses it to cut the entire forest itself," he had noted.

The CJI's oral statement in open court takes a significant note amidst rising public denouncement of Central and State law enforcement agencies using the sedition law to silence dissent, muffle free expression and for denying bail to incarcerated activists, journalists, students and civil society members.

A number of petitions have been filed highlighting the "chilling effect" sedition has on the fundamental right of free speech.

Birth, death reporting to be automated

Centre plans revamp of the Civil Registration System that is linked to National Population Register

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Union government is planning to revamp the Civil Registration System (CRS) to enable the registration of birth and death in real-time with minimum human intervention and independent of location, according to the 2020-21 annual report of the Union Home Ministry.

The CRS, run by the Registrar-General of India (RGI), is linked to the National Population Register (NPR), which already has a database of 119 crore residents. The report said there was a need to update the NPR, first collated in 2010 and updated in 2015 with Aadhaar, mobile phone and ration card numbers, "to incorporate the changes due to birth, death and migration. The NPR is to be updated with the decennial Census exercise that has been postponed indefinitely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report said, "The CRS system is facing challenges in terms of timelines, efficiency and uniformity, leading to delayed and under-coverage of birth and death. To address the challenges faced by the system in providing prompt service delivery to the public, the Government of India has decided to introduce transformational changes in the Civil Registration System of the country through an IT [information technology]-enabled backbone leading to registration of birth and death in real-time basis with minimum human intervention."

Error-free: The changes would be sustainable, scalable and independent of the location, says the report. • PTI

Sustainable change

It said the changes would be in terms of automating the process delivery points so that the service delivery was time-bound, uniform and free from discretion. "The changes would be sustainable, scalable and independent of the location."

Last year, several instances of the online registration system being compromised were reported from States, with the login IDs and passwords of sub-registrars compromised and available in the open domain.

Following this, Deputy Registrar-General Sandhya Singh issued an advisory to the Chief Registrars of all States to avoid the misuse of the online portal user and login ID.

"A few State governments have reported issuance of fake birth and death certificates, including misuse of the user/login ID and password created in the existing portal/software developed for online registration of birth and death by unauthorised persons. This has resulted in the registration of criminal cases in some instances," the July 28, 2021 advisory said.

At present, the online software available on www.crsorgi.gov.in is operational in 22 States and Union Territories.

Amendments to Act

The RGI that functions under the Home Ministry has proposed amendments to the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 that will enable it to "maintain the database of registered birth and deaths at the national level".

According to the proposed amendments, the database may be used to update the population register, electoral register, Aadhaar, ration card, passport and driving licence databases, *The Hindu* had reported.

The registration of birth and death is mandatory under the Act and the Chief Registrar is mandated to publish a statistical report on the registered births and deaths during the year.

The RGI is empowered under Section 3(3) of the 1969 Act to take steps to coordinate and unify the activities of the Chief Registrars of births and deaths of all States.

The Ministry report noted that the proportion of total registered births and deaths had steadily increased over the years.

"The registration level of births has increased to 89.3% in 2018 from 81.3% in 2009. On the other hand, the registration level of deaths has increased from 66.9% in 2009 to 86% in 2018," it pointed out, adding that the level of total registration of deaths was lower than that of births in the States except Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu and the Union Territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep.

"Lower level of death registration may partly be attributed to non-reporting of domiciliary deaths and deaths of females and infants," it said.

Meghalaya tribes oppose boundary deal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

An autonomous tribal council in Meghalaya has formed a coordination committee to prepare the ground to challenge the partial boundary deal with Assam in court.

The Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC) constituted the committee on Tuesday with representatives of five traditional Khasi tribal States called Himas. Each of these Himas have areas bordering Assam.

The KHADC is one of the three tribe-based councils in Meghalaya. The other two are the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council and the Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council.

Filing petition

"The council will file a petition in the court opposing the memorandum of understanding to settle six of the 12 disputed sectors on the Assam-Meghalaya boundary once our boundary panel studies the report of the coordination committee," Pynshngain N. Syiem, a member of the KHADC, said.

"We have to seek redressal from the court as the State government is adamant about not reviewing the boundary deal," he added. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Meghalaya counterpart, Conrad K. Sangma, had signed the understanding on January 29 to settle the border dispute in six "less complicated" sectors. The Centre gave its assent to the agreement two months later.

Labour codes to be rolled out soon

Ministry to release report of employment survey today, says Bhupender Yadav

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The four labour codes, which were passed by Parliament in 2019 and 2020, would be implemented soon, with only a handful of the States left to draft their own rules under the codes, Union Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav said on Wednesday.

Asked when the codes would be rolled out, Mr. Yadav said "soon". He said all but three or four States had drafted their rules under the codes. While the Labour Ministry had prepared its rules under the four codes last year, they had not been notified.

As many as 29 Central Acts on wages, social security, occupational safety and industrial relations have been subsumed into four codes. Asked about the rumoured date of implementation, July 1, Mr. Yadav did not comment. With labour being a subject on the Concurrent List, Mr. Yadav said a "consensus" was being built with the States. The Ministry would be releasing the third quarter report of its Quarterly Employment Survey as part of the All-India Quarterly Establishment-based Employment Survey that covers nine selected sectors on Thursday, Mr. Yadav said.

In the second report released in January, the survey found employment had increased by about 2 lakh from April-June 2021 to July-September 2021.

It comes just days after a Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy report said half the working age population had exited the labour force, a finding the Ministry countered on Tuesday.

In a statement, the Ministry said the number of working age population not seeking work included 10 crore students as well as those engaged in unpaid activities such as care-giving.

The Ministry said it was incorrect to infer that half the working age population had lost hope and dropped out of work.

Ban orders in Roorkee stop *Dharam Sansad*

Police detain 10 persons related to the event

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Uttarakhand administration imposed Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure prohibiting assembly of more than four persons in Roorkee where a *Dharam Sansad* was scheduled on Wednesday. The police have detained nearly 10 persons associated with the event.

A day ago, the Supreme Court directed the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary to place on record that no untoward statement would be made at the event at Dada Jalalpur village, and warned that it would hold top officials responsible in case any hate speech is made.

The village was witness to communal tensions on April 16 when a Hanuman Jayanti procession was allegedly pelted with stones.

On Tuesday, a three-judge Bench of the court headed by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar said, "We will hold the Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and the IG concerned responsible if any untoward situation happens despite your assurance. We are putting it on record."

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Uttarakhand Director-General of Police Ashok Kumar said, "The programme could not take place as we imposed Section 144 (CrPC) in the area. Around 10 persons have been detained under Section 151 CrPC. We ensured that the restrictions are imposed strictly." Anand Swaroop, the main organiser of the religious conclave, has been taken into preventive detention.

Section 151 says that a police officer knowing of a design to commit any cognizable offence may arrest, without orders from a magistrate and without a warrant, the person so designing, if it appears to such officer that the commission of the offence cannot be otherwise prevented.

"Thirty-three people associated with organising the event have been detained to prevent the *mahapanchayat* from taking place. Those detained include Kali Sena's State convener Dineshanand Bharti, who had given a call for holding the event and his six supporters," SSP Yogendra Singh Rawat was quoted by *PTI* as saying.

J&K HC refuses to quash FIR for lawyer's posts

'Not part of freedom of expression'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday refused to quash a first information report (FIR) lodged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act [UAPA] against a lawyer for his social media posts. The court said lines such as "slaves of the Government of India" or "they [the people] are under occupation of armed forces of the country" are not protected by the right to freedom of expression.

"The first post quoted indicates that the petitioner advocates that the people of Kashmir are slaves and it [J&K] is under occupation which is like a cancer...the petitioner is advocating that this part of the country is under the occupation of the Indian military. In my opinion, the freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under the Constitution cannot be stretched to such a limit as to allow a person to question the status of a part of the country or its people," Justice Sanjay Dhar observed.

The judge held that by uploading these posts, the accused had "crossed the *Lakshman Rekha*", which demarcates the freedom of expression guaranteed under Article 19 of the Constitution of India from the reasonable restrictions imposed on such freedom on the grounds of India's sovereignty and integrity.

Muzamil Butt, the petitioner, had challenged FIR No.187/2018 for offences under Section 13 of the UAPA registered with the police station at Kulgam, in Jammu and Kashmir.

Loudspeakers removed from religious sites in U.P.

10,923 illegal loudspeakers removed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government on Wednesday said it had removed 10,923 unauthorised loudspeakers from religious places and lowered the volume of 35,221 loudspeakers to within the permissible limit.

The drive was launched after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath recently instructed officials to ensure that sound of loudspeakers does not disturb others outside the premises where it was installed. Also, no permission would be granted for installing loudspeakers at new sites. Till April 27, the government had removed 10,923 loudspeakers across 12 administrative zones across the State in compliance of directions by the Allahabad High Court, said officials.

The highest number of loudspeakers were removed in Lucknow zone (2,395), Gorakhpur (1,788), Varanasi (1,366), Meerut (1,204) and Prayagraj. Additional Director-General of Police, Law and Order Prashant Kumar said the police had established communication over the matter with over 37,300 religious heads.

Plan for 4G upgrade in LWE areas

BSNL will maintain the sites for another five years: official

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) project for upgrading 2G mobile services to 4G at security sites in LWE (Left Wing Extremism) areas at an estimated cost of about ₹2,426.39 crore.

An official statement said the project envisaged upgrading 2,343 sites in Phase-I from 2G to 4G mobile services at an estimated cost of ₹1,884.59 crore (excluding taxes and levies).

"This includes O&M for five years. However, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) will maintain the sites for another five years at its own cost. The work will be awarded to it because these sites belong to it," it said. Additionally, the Cabinet also approved the funding of operations and maintenance cost of LWE Phase-I 2G sites by BSNL for an extended period beyond the contractual period of five years at an estimated cost of ₹541.80 crore. The extension would be up to 12 months from the date of approval by the Cabinet or the commissioning of 4G sites, whichever was earlier, it noted.

The project is to upgrade 2,343 sites in Phase-I from 2G to 4G mobile services.

"The government chose BSNL for a prestigious project to [promote] indigenous 4G telecom equipment so as to achieve self-reliance in the telecom gear segment to fulfil domestic market needs apart from exporting to other markets," it said.

Revoke redundant laws: Modi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Underlining that running a government is a collective responsibility, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday suggested to Ministers that they have comprehensive knowledge of governance issues going beyond their respective ministries, sources said.

Mr. Modi suggested them to identify redundant laws in their Ministries and move towards scrapping them, the sources said.

He asked them to ensure the effective delivery of government schemes on the ground.

IN BRIEF

Udai Bhan is new Haryana Cong. president

GURUGRAM

Former Hodal MLA Udai Bhan was on Wednesday appointed Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee president replacing Kumari Selja, ending suspense over change in party's State leadership. Mr. Bhan is considered to be a loyalist of former Chief Minister and Haryana CLP leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda. A press statement by AICC said the party president had accepted the resignation of Ms. Selja.

Preliminary enquiry against Param Bir Singh

NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered three preliminary enquiries against former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh to examine the allegations of corruption and abuse of official position. The move comes about two weeks after the agency, following a Supreme Court directive, took over the probe into five cases registered by the Maharashtra Police against Mr. Singh and others. On March 24, the SC had directed the CBI to hold further inquiry into the cases.

Group slams bid to notify them as per religion

GUWAHATI

A mostly Muslim ethnic group has slammed the BJP-led Assam government's decision to notify Assamese Muslims as a distinct indigenous community. The move, based on the recommendations of a panel that the State government set up in July 2021, seeks to identify a section of the Assamese by their religion and not by their ethnicity, the Sadou Asom Goria Jatiya Parishad (SAGJP) said on Wednesday. These communities have been classified according to those Muslims, who have either settled down in Assam or converted from other communities since the 13th century.

Opposition irked by Modi's VAT remark

West Bengal and Maharashtra CMs say the Centre is discriminating against States ruled by BJP rivals

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Leaders of various Opposition parties on Wednesday reacted sharply to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comments that the States ruled by BJP rivals had not reduced value-added tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel despite the Centre slashing excise duty and that they should do so now to help consumers.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her Maharashtra counterpart, Uddhav Thackeray, said the Centre was discriminating against such States and giving preferential treatment to those ruled by the BJP.

The Union government owes ₹26,500 crore to the Maharashtra government. Maharashtra's contribution in direct taxes collection at the national level is 38.3% and its share in the GST (collection) is 15%, but the Centre gives us stepmotherly treatment

UDDHAV THACKERAY MAHARASHTRA CM

'Not on agenda'

Ms. Banerjee wondered why the Prime Minister chose to raise the issue at a meeting of Chief Ministers convened to discuss the rising number of COVID-19 cases.

Kerala Finance Minister K.N. Balagopal said Mr. Modi's stand was misleading, and instead of asking resource-starved States to slash their limited income source, the Centre should stop collecting cess and surcharge on petrol and diesel.

The Congress said Mr. Modi's remarks did not befit the Prime Minister's office and were "irresponsible".

During the virtual interaction with the Chief Ministers, the Prime Minister said the Centre had urged the States to reduce taxes after it had done so, but several of them had not. For some reason or the other, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu had not passed on the benefit to consumers, he said.

"We wanted that prices of petroleum products be reduced, and his [Prime Minister's] gift is that he is telling the States, you decrease VAT. From where will we do that," Ms. Banerjee asked.

The West Bengal Chief Minister said the Centre owed ₹97,000 crore to West Bengal and even if half of the amount were to be disbursed to the State, the government was willing to reduced VAT on petroleum.

She said her government was giving a ₹1 reduction on VAT on petroleum products, which had cost the State exchequer ₹1,500 crore.

Ms. Banerjee said that since coming to power, the Narendra Modi government had raised ₹17,31,242 crore through excise collection on petroleum products. Of the money raised through central taxes, only 25% was given to the States.

Outstanding dues

The Maharashtra Chief Minister alleged that the Centre was not paying the State its due.

"The Union government owes ₹26,500 crore to the Maharashtra government. Maharashtra's contribution in direct taxes collection at the national level is 38.3% and its share in the GST [collection] is 15%, but the Centre gives us stepmotherly treatment," Mr. Thackeray said.

Mr. Thackeray said that Mr. Modi's hint that fuel was costly because of State taxes was removed from reality. "Today in Mumbai, behind every litre of diesel, the Centre's VAT is ₹24.38, while the State VAT is ₹22.37. For petrol, ₹31.58 is the Centre's tax, while the State tax is ₹32.55," he said.

Kerala's response

Mr. Balagopal said, "Kerala has not raised sales tax on petrol and diesel in the past six years. It is one of the few States which has not done so. So what is it that we should reduce? After the LDF came to power, tax was reduced on one occasion."

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said, "... the Prime Minister expects the states to reduce VAT on petrol and diesel, without first giving an account of the Central Excise, through which the Central government has earned ₹27 lakh crores in the past eight years."

A.K. Antony bids farewell to parliamentary politics

Delhi doesn't hold charm anymore, says Congress leader

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

Veteran Congress leader A.K. Antony bid farewell to parliamentary politics and Delhi on Wednesday after spending 38 years in five stints in the Rajya Sabha, where his final tenure ended on April 7. At 81 years, the former Defence Minister wants to slowly withdraw from national politics too.

Long innings: A.K. Antony. • PTI

For now, he will continue in all positions within the Congress, including the Congress Working Committee (CWC).

Mr. Antony came to Delhi for the first time in 1973 as a 33-year-old Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president-elect to meet Indira Gandhi. He was the youngest president of the Kerala unit, a record that still remains unbroken.

Remembering those simpler times, Mr. Antony, speaking to *The Hindu*, said, "I took a taxi from Kerala House, where I was staying, to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's residence at 1 Safdarjung Road. My taxi was allowed to go till the courtyard of the house and Ms. Gandhi herself came to receive me."

His relation to the Congress top leadership did not stop him from parting ways with Indira Gandhi to be first part of the Congress (Urs) formed by then Chief Minister of Karnataka D. Devaraj Urs, and later forming his own outfit in Kerala, the Congress(A), in 1978. He stayed away from the Congress for four years.

He acknowledged on Wednesday that in 1982, when he returned to the Congress, he was received by Indira Gandhi without any malice. The three-time Kerala Chief Minister and India's longest-serving Defence Minister expressed his debt to the Gandhi family.

"The Congress cannot exist without the Gandhi family at the centre of it. It's the Gandhi family that is holding the party together. I have nothing to say to those who believe that they can erect a Congress without the Gandhi family," he said.

'Pivot of Opposition'

And the Congress, in turn, he said, was the pivot of Opposition politics. Those who are serious about uprooting the BJP government should remember that a change of guard at the Centre was not possible without the Congress playing a lead role. The steep slide in the party's electoral fortunes since 2014 was only a temporary glitch. "One must remember, that no one can stay in power forever. A period of five to 10 years is a small time in a country's history. Congress is the only party to have a presence in every village of India," he noted.

Though withdrawing from Delhi-centric politics, Mr. Antony did not rule out his participation in the party in Kerala. "I am 81 years old. I will be active as per my age," he said. He was elected to the CWC in 1991 with the second highest number of votes. He said he was not resigning from other party positions, including in the CWC, but he clarified that once a new president is in place following the organisational elections, he may not be part of the working committee too. "I have left parliamentary politics and I want to slowly withdraw from national politics too," he added.

Mr. Antony's career in Delhi will be remembered for his assiduous efforts to steer clear of all controversies and carefully framing his answers to any difficult questions. In line with his style, when he was asked about the recent Prashant Kishor fiasco, he dismissed it in one line. "My opinion is same as the party's opinion."

Departure from capital

So has Delhi lost its charm for the veteran leader? Mr. Antony replied with an emphatic "Yes". He said, "There is a time for everything. And my conscience said that my time here is over." He took the decision to quit politics in the capital about a year and a half ago when he had been in the AIIMS, Delhi, with COVID-19.

"When I had come to Delhi, it was a free place, without any security protocols tying us down. As an MP in 1985, I could walk to Parliament, strolling through the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Or if it was a humid day, I could take an auto. Now it is unthinkable. Delhi is changed," he said.

PM to undertake three-nation tour in the first week of May

He will visit Germany, Denmark and France, says Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a three-nation tour of Germany, Denmark and France from May 2 to 4, the Ministry of External Affairs has announced. The tour will take place against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine.

In Berlin, Mr. Modi will hold talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the leaders will co-chair the sixth edition of the India-Germany inter-governmental consultations.

Minister of State for Federal Foreign Office Tobias Lindner told prespersons in New Delhi that the visit would focus on renewable energy and other opportunities that had opened up because of the war in Ukraine and Europe's collective response to confront Russia for the military aggression against Ukraine. "It will give both sides an opportunity to exchange ideas," Mr. Lindner said.

"We want to have cooperation in technology, education, security and climate change with India. No major problem can be solved without India. India is such an important partner," Mr. Lindner said at a press conference on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue. From Berlin, Mr. Modi will travel to Copenhagen to participate in the second India-Nordic Summit, which is being hosted by Denmark.

In Copenhagen, apart from meeting Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, Mr. Modi will interact with other leaders of the Nordic countries such as Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Finland.

He will then stop at Paris where he is scheduled to meet French President Emmanuel Macron. France and India are marking 75 years of establishment of diplomatic ties this year.

No individual is bigger than party, says Congress

Always open to suggestions: Khera

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

No individual is bigger than the party but the Congress always keeps its doors and windows open, party spokesperson Pawan Khera said on Wednesday as the break-up between election strategist Prashant Kishor and the party continued to dominate the headlines.

"The doors and windows of the Congress are always open. If you give suggestions, it will be open for you as well," Mr. Khera told presspersons when asked if Mr. Kishor's possible entry into the Congress was a closed chapter.

While the Congress officially tried to play down the poll strategist's refusal to join the party, several fresh details were leaked by Congress functionaries on what could have led to the break-up.

One of them said Mr. Kishor's demand that he would report only to the Congress president was a stumbling block.

Though the party leaders were impressed with his data on voting and voters' preference at the both level, Mr. Kishor's insistence on having a team of 5,000 support staff that would only report to him and his demand that he would lead negotiations with potential allies were also irritants, the functionary said.

Kishor will stand by me, says Patidar leader Naresh Patel

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Naresh Patel, a prominent Patidar community leader in Gujarat, on Wednesday said his decision on joining politics would be announced by the end of the month, and that poll strategist Prashant Kishor would "stand by him", irrespective of Mr. Kishor's decision to not join the Congress.

It was being speculated earlier that Mr. Patel, who wields considerable influence over the Leuva Patidar community in the politically important Saurashtra region, would join the Congress along with Mr. Kishor.

However, on Tuesday, the Congress said that Mr. Kishor had declined to join the party.

On Wednesday, Mr. Patel, after a meeting of the trustees of the Shri Khodaldham Trust (SKT), a socio-cultural community group of Patidars, said that his decision on whether to join active politics was independent of Mr. Kishor's decision.

'Old friend'

"As I repeatedly said, Prashant Kishor is my old friend and we have been meeting frequently. The decision he made yesterday is his personal and professional decision on which I can't comment. However, I am fully hopeful that he will stand by me, should I join active politics," Mr. Patel told mediapersons in Rajkot. Mr. Patel added that his decision would be announced soon, and by mid-May, "everything will be clear".

Trinamool hopes to fill Opposition vacuum in Assam with expansion drive

GUWAHATI

The Trinamool Congress launched its expansion drive in Assam on Wednesday. Trinamool Lok Sabha member Mahua Moitra said the party would be the voice of the common people of Assam as all the parties in the Opposition have "become puppets" in the hands of the BJP. "There is no one to represent the commoner's voice. We will fill the vacuum," she said at a function in Guwahati where scores of Congress leaders and members formally joined the party.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT
Chennai Construction and Maintenance Circle

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No. 06/2022-2023/HDO, Dated: 26.04.2022

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, **Percentage tender through online only** will be received upto **17.05.2022, 12.30 PM** by the Superintending Engineer (H), C&M, Chennai Circle for work under Permanent Flood Restoration Works 2020 (2 works) and CRIDP 2021-22 (1 work) pertaining to Chennai City Roads (H) C&M Division.

Details of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents, and all other details will be available from **29.04.2022** onwards in the Government website **https://tntenders.gov.in** If any Changes / Corrections in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer (H),
C & M, Chennai Circle

DIPR/2023/Tender/2022

"சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்."

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
TAMIL NADU URBAN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT BOARD
No. 5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai - 600 005, Tamil Nadu, India

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI)
(Consulting Services – Individual Selection)

Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNUHDB), Government of Tamil Nadu is implementing the Tamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project financed by the World Bank. TNUHDB now invites eligible Individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services for the below mentioned assignments for TNUHDB under the World Bank financed Tamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project.

Selection of Individual Consultant:

(1) Procurement Consultant

(2) 2 Nos of Environmental Specialists at TNUHDB Circle level

The detailed REOI and Terms of Reference are available in the websites - **www.tnscb.org and www.tenders.tn.gov.in.** The Expression of Interest (EOI) shall be submitted for each assignment separately. Last date and time for submission of EOI for Selection of Individual Consultant is **13.05.2022 up to 5:45 PM.** The EOI shall be sent to **the Superintending Engineer, Project Monitoring Unit - World Bank Project, Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board, No.5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai- 600 005, Tamil Nadu, India.** E-mail: **tnuhdbprocurement@gmail.com.**

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
Project Monitoring Unit

DIPR/ 2046 / TENDER /2022

"சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்."

THE ENGLISH AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY
(A Central University)
HYDERABAD - 500 007, Telangana

ADMISSION NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited for admission to the **Post Graduate Certificate in the Teaching of English (PGCTE) (DISTANCE MODE)** Programme for the academic year 2022-2023. The application form with instructions is available on the University website www.efluniversity.ac.in. The last date for receipt of filled in applications is May 30, 2022.

Sd/-
REGISTRAR I/C

भारत सरकार, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / Government of India, Department of Space
राष्ट्रीय सुदूर संवेदन केंद्र / National Remote Sensing Centre
हैदराबाद – 500 037, तेलंगाना, भारत / Balanagar, Hyderabad-500 037, Telangana, India
टेलीफोन / Telephone:+040-23884173/74 फैक्स / Fax:+040-23884179

निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह / CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
ई निविदा नोटिस / e-Tender Notice

समूहप्रधान, सीएमजी, एनआरएससी, हैदराबाद द्वारा निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए ऑन–लाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। / Online tenders are invited by the Gr. Head CMG, NRSC, Hyderabad for the following works:

एनआईटी सं NIT NO.	कार्य का नाम Name of Work	अनुमानित प्राक्कलित लागत Approximate Estimated Cost (Rs.)	निविदा दस्तावेज डाउनलोड करने की अवधि Period during which the tender document can be downloaded	बोली अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि Last date for Bid uploading
NRSC/CMG/NIT/ET/01/2482-CW/2022-23	पालयमकोट्टै, तिरुनलवेली, तमिलनाडु में एसईएसएस की साईट के लिए नई कम्पाउन्ड वॉल का निर्माण। Construction of new compound wall at rear side for site at SESS, Palaymkottai, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu	रू. 96.16 लाख / Lakhs	From 28.04.2022 से / to 07.05.2022 तक	Upto 10.05.2022 को 16:00 बजे / hrs तक

विस्तृत एनआईटी एवं पात्रता मानदंड ईएमडी बोली संबंधित प्रलेख आदि www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO पोर्टल से देखा / डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। किसी प्रकार के संशोधन, समय विस्तार, स्पष्टीकरण आदि वेबसाइट पर अपलोड किया जाएगा और किसी समाचारपत्र में प्रकाशित नहीं किया जाएगा। बोलीकर्ता अद्यतन जानकारी हेतु नियमित रुप से वेबसाइट देखें।

Detailed NIT and eligibility criteria, EMD bidding document, etc. can be viewed /download from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO portal. All amendments, time extension, clarifications, etc. will be uploaded on website and will not be published in newspapers. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.

हस्ता / Sd/-
समूह प्रधान, निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह / Group Head, Construction & Maint. Group

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, East Wing, 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan Race Course Road
Bengaluru – 560 001. website : www.kiadb.in, e-Mail: cdoce1@kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-E-Service2/1322/2022-23 Date: 25.04.2022

Short term Tender Notification for Request for Proposal (RFP) For Selection of Consultants for Providing Services
(Through GOK e – Procurement Portal Only)

KIADB invites Tenders from reputed consultants/firms under two cover bid system having vast experience and proven record of similar nature of work for Providing Services for Land Audit including individual plot survey and assets of KIADB industrial areas.

Name of the work: (1) Providing services for Land Audit including individual plot survey and assets of KIADB industrial areas coming in the Jurisdiction of Executive Engineer-Ballari (7 Industrial Area – Total Extent: 3777.16 Acres) Package-4 **(2)** Providing services for Land Audit including individual plot survey and assets of KIADB industrial areas coming in the Jurisdiction of Executive Engineer-Kalaburgi (9 Industrial Area – Total Extent: 3373.43 Acres) Package-5 **(3)** Providing services for Land Audit including individual plot survey and assets of KIADB industrial areas coming in the Jurisdiction of Executive Engineer-Hassan (4 Industrial Area – Total Extent: 2045.97 Acres) Package-6 **(4)** Providing services for Land Audit including individual plot survey and assets of KIADB industrial areas coming in the Jurisdiction of Executive Engineer-Mangaluru (6 Industrial Area – Total Extent: 2125.09 Acres) Package-7

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **16.05.2022 upto 04:00 pm**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the E-Procurement Portal **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-2, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/315/Zankar/2022-23

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

ODISHA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
Regd. Office: Janpath, Bhubaneswar-751022
CIN:U40102OR2004SGC007553

TENDER ALERT

1) E-Tender Notice No.CPC-59/2021-22: Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 2nd 132kV Feeder bay both at 132/33 kV Grid S/S Padampur & 132/33kV Grid S/S Nuapada in Bargarh & Nuapada district of Odisha respectively on Turnkey Contract Basis.
2) Tender Notice No.SLDC-01/2022-23: Selection of Project Management Consultant (PMC) to assist SLDC/OPTCL in implementation of of Scheduling, Accounting, Metering and Settlement of Transactions in Electricity (SAMAST)" with an estimated cost of Rs.2.5842 Crore.
Complete set of bidding documents are available on **www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL** portal and OPTCL's official website: **www.optcl.co.in.**

HIPR-04/2022-23

CAD-326 OIPR-04011/11/0014/2223

ODISHA MINING CORPORATION LIMITED
OMC House, Bhubaneswar-751001, Odisha
CIN: U13100OR1956SGC000313, www.omcltd.in

OMC ODISHA NEW OPPORTUNITIES Mining Happiness

No. 6654 /OMC/ 2022 NOTICE Date: 26/04/2022

In pursuance of Advertisement No. 65/OMC dtd. 04.01.2022 and Notice No.6560/OMC dtd.23.04.2022 regarding Computer Proficiency Test (CPT) for the post of Jr. Accountant, this is for information of the provisionally shortlisted candidates that the e-Admit Card will be dispatched / issued to the candidates through email on **27.04.2022.**

The e-Admit Card can also be downloaded from OMC website (**https://omcltd.in**). The following credentials shall be used by the provisionally shortlisted candidates for downloading the e-Admit Card.

Login ID : Roll Number (Used at the time of Computer Based Test(CBT))

Password : Date of Birth (DDMMYYYY)

The candidates are required to download all the pages of the e-Admit card and go through the important instructions/ contents of the same carefully.

For any queries, candidates are advised to contact the helpdesk number : 0674-2377530 (from 10AM to 5.30PM on working days).

Sd/-
GENERAL MANAGER (P&A)

NB : *Candidates are advised to check the OMC website (**https://omcltd.in**) regularly for further updates*

CAD-320: OIPR-30005/11/0019/2223

Centre evicting artists from govt. houses

90-year-old Odissi dancer Guru Mayadhar Raut was the first to be sent out of accommodation in Delhi

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday began the process of eviction of eminent artists from government accommodation, starting with the 90-year-old Odissi dancer Guru Mayadhar Raut.

The allotment of houses was cancelled in 2014.

After the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry issued notices to the artists to vacate the houses in 2020, a group of the allottees, including the late Birju Maharaj, had moved court.

Among those allotted houses were artist Jatin Das and santoor player Pandit Bhajan Sopori.

Madhumita Raut, artist and daughter of Guru Mayadhar Raut, a Padma Shri winner, said on Wednesday the artists had lost their case on February 25 and had

Guru Mayadhar Raut evicted from a government house, with his Padma Shri award dumped outside. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

time till April 25 to vacate the houses at the Asian Games Village here. She said they had filed an appeal in the Delhi High Court, which was scheduled to be heard on Wednesday morning.

"The Directorate of Estates knew our appeal was to be heard on Wednesday so they came with their staff and the police to forcibly throw out our belongings on Tuesday. They came at 1 p.m. and I was serving lunch to my father. I appealed to them to allow my father to eat but they did not allow it," she said.

Ms. Raut said she was in the process of emptying the house which was allotted to her father over 25 years ago on Wednesday and moving him to a student's house as a temporary measure.

'Inhumane manner'

"I don't mind if they evict, but the way in which it was done was inhumane. The houses were allotted to artists who work in the guru-shishya tradition and don't care for commercial interests. Isn't it the government's responsibility to take care of Padma awardees," she said.

Vanashree Rao, wife of Kuchipudi dancer Guru Jayarama Rao, who was allotted a house at the Asian Games Village in 1987, said that so far, Mr. Raut was the only one of the group to be evicted.

In November 2020, the Cabinet Committee on Accommodation decided to waive damage charges of ₹32.09 crore accumulated by 27 persons for overstaying at the allotted houses beyond 2014 and gave them time till December 31 that year to vacate.

According to the government's policy, up to 40 artists can be allotted accommodation under a special quota in the General Pool Residential Accommodation on the recommendation of the Culture Ministry if they earned under ₹20,000 a month. A Directorate of Estates official said the evictions would continue as the court did not give the artists relief on Wednesday.

Eviction proceedings would be carried out against the others within a week, the official said.

Ukraine doing better at a tactical level: Navy chief

War concerns amplified by China's comments: U.S. Admiral

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Superiority between weapons will always be there and the Ukrainians are doing better at a tactical level, Navy chief Admiral R. Hari Kumar said at the Raisina Dialogue summit on Wednesday.

Speaking at the event, Admiral John C. Aquilino, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, said concerns over the war were "amplified" by China's comments which had resulted in "great concern for the future". "We are all concerned with what we watched in Ukraine. We watched unprovoked action to generate a war. This is a very concerning time from the lens of global security. It is amplified by the comments by the People's Republic of China (PRC) with regard to no limits between those two nations. That gives me great concern for the future," Adm. Aquilino said.

He said what has to happen and what we are watching is "this set of like-minded nations and others around the globe utilising all forms of technology to be able to deliver what the U.S. Secretary of Defence calls 'integrated deterrence'".

Stating that this was utilising all forms of national power, in all domains, combined with allies and partners and "that's what we are doing every day", the Admiral said, "We are operating together, we are being interoperable, we are sharing information, we are sharing technologies all together for a conflict-free and a free and open Indo-Pacific."

Navy chief Admiral R. Hari Kumar with Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Admiral John Aquilino. •PTI

To questions on Ukraine and the performance of the Russian and Ukrainian militaries, Adm. Kumar said, "Superiority between weapons will always be there. We need to find ways and means of exploiting them to the best possible."

In this regard, he said the Ukrainians were doing "better at the tactical level".

'Uncertain future'

Stating that "we are in a contested present" and looking to an "uncertain future", Adm. Kumar said, "We try to respond and be the first responder in the Indian Ocean Region, which helps in developing trust, interoperability, information exchange, good practices, and domain awareness. All this translates into maritime security."

Adm. Kumar further stated that it was impossible for any one country to ensure maritime security. "Therefore, there is a need for cooperation, collaboration, interaction and interoperability so that collectively we can ensure peace for the benefit of our region," he stressed. In the Ukraine conflict, war is not only in conventional domains but in new domains such as space, the cyber world, and information, said General Koji Yamazaki, Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of the Japanese Self Defence Forces.

Talking of grey zone tactics, Gen. Angus Campbell, Chief of Defence Force, Australia, said technology and the will to apply the technology in "novel coercive ways" is what we are talking in the grey zone and that is what we are seeing now, especially by authoritarian regimes.

"It is strength that is respected by authoritarian powers," he stated. Air Marshal Luc De Rancourt, Deputy Director General for International Affairs and Strategy in the Ministry for Armed Forces, France, said the French Indo-Pacific strategy was completely aligned with the EU Indo-Pacific strategy.

Mehbooba flays Army school's order on hijab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Former Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday objected to an order on hijab issued by the Dagger Parivaar School in Baramulla in north Kashmir.

The school is jointly run by the Indrani Balan Foundation and the Army's Chinar Corps.

In the order, school authorities have asked the staff "to avoid hijab during school hours, so that students can feel comfortable and forthcoming to interact with teachers and staff".

"A trust must be established with the students to make them feel welcome, safe and happy," the order, issued earlier this month, said.

'Right to choose'

Uploading the order on social media, the PDP chief posted, she condemned the letter issuing diktats on hijab. "Jammu and Kashmir may be ruled by the BJP, but it's certainly not like any other State where they bulldoze the houses of minorities and not allow them the freedom to dress as they want. Our girls will not give up their right to choose," Ms. Mufti said.

National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah said, "It is religious obligation and nobody has a right to interfere in our religious matters."

The Army has been running the Dagger Parivaar School since 2017 for differently-abled children.

J&K hydroelectric project approved

Cabinet green lights investment of ₹4,526.12 crore in venture in Kishtwar district

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday approved an investment of ₹4,526.12 crore for the 540-megawatt Kwar hydroelectric project on the Chenab in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur said the project would be implemented by Chenab Valley Power Projects Private Ltd., a joint venture between the NHPC and the Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation, with equity contribution of 51% and 49%. The project, to be commissioned within 54 months, is expected to generate 1975.54 million units in a 90% dependable year.

Jobs due to project

According to the government, construction activities of the Project would result in direct and indirect employment of about 2,500 people. The CCEA also approved the continuation of lending under the Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi till December 2024.

The scheme was initially only to facilitate loans involving ₹5,000 crore but the amount has now been increased to ₹8,100 crore.

The budget for promotion of digital payments, including cashback to the vendors, has also been enhanced. The decision is expected to benefit nearly 1.2 crore citizens in urban areas, said the government. As on April 25, as many as 31.9 lakh loans were sanctioned under the scheme and 29.6 lakh loans amounting to ₹2,931 crore were disbursed. The government said the beneficiaries conducted over 13.5 crore digital transactions and were given a cashback of ₹10 crore. An interest subsidy of ₹51 crore was also extended.

IPPB branches

The Union Cabinet cleared the revision of project outlay for setting up India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) branches from ₹1,435 crore to ₹2,255 crore. It also granted in-principle approval for future fund infusion of ₹500 crore for regulatory requirements and technological upgrade.

HAL begins airframe fatigue test on light combat aircraft

They are to be carried out over a period of 8 to 9 years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) has commenced the Main Airframe Fatigue Test (MAFT) of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1 airframe at the Ground Test Centre of the Aircraft Research and Design Centre (ARDC), Bengaluru, the firm said on Wednesday.

"These tests will be carried out over a period of eight to nine years. The successful completion of the MAFT will qualify the LCA [Air Force] Mk1 airframe for its full service life," it stated.

Capability test

As per the military airworthiness requirements, the fatigue test had to demonstrate the capability of the airframe to withstand four times the service life, it noted. The airframe is the same for the LCA Mk1 in service and the more capable LCA-Mk1A, 83 of which the IAF has contracted for.

A Tejas aircraft performing at Aero India 2021 in Bengaluru. •FILE PHOTO

The MK1A is expected to roll out in the next couple of months. "Despite the setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the HAL has been able to commence the MAFT testing within the timelines planned", Arup Chatterjee, Director (Engineering and R&D), HAL, said.

Air Vice Marshal K.V.R. Raju, Director of the Indian Air Force project management team, stressed the importance of the commencement of the testing towards clearance of the full life of LCA fleet.

The test plan and schedule for the test has been jointly arrived at by the designers from the HAL and scientists from the Aeronautical Development Agency in coordination with the Regional Centre for Military Airworthiness, CEMILAC.

'Delhi should be under Centre's control'

National capital can't be left to the 'small mercies' of a State legislature, says S-G

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central government on Wednesday argued that Delhi, the nation's capital and a sprawling metropolis, should be under its control.

Delhi cannot be left to the "small mercies and smaller resources" of a State legislature, it reasoned.

The Centre was justifying the intent behind the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, or GNCTD Act, of 2021. Parliament later also enacted the Transaction of Business of Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act.

The Delhi government has contended in the Supreme Court that the amended sections of the GNCTD Act diminish the constitutionally guaranteed powers and functions of the elected Legislative Assembly.

A three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana is hearing a plea by the Delhi government to quash the amended sections of the GNCTD Act and several Rules of the Transaction of Business of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Rules, 1993.

Perpetual friction

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, for the Centre, compared Delhi to London, saying the capital was the country's most visible and recognised destination. "There are issues concerning Delhi which have an all-India point of view. There should not be a state of perpetual friction between the Centre and the State. The important issues concerning the Capital should be exclusively legislated by Parliament," he submitted.

> **There are issues concerning Delhi which have an all-India point of view... The important issues concerning the capital should be exclusively legislated by Parliament**
>
> TUSHAR MEHTA
> Solicitor-General

"A metropolis of a large country like ours cannot depend on the small mercies and smaller resources of a State legislature," he said in court. Mr. Mehta urged the three-judge Bench to refer the case to a larger Bench.

The Delhi government has contended that the amendments in 2021 violate the doctrine of basic structure of the Constitution. The Centre, through its amendments, has given more power to the Lieutenant Governor (LG) than the elected government of the people of Delhi, it argued.

In the petition, the Delhi government has stated that the amendments overturn the constitutionally stipulated balance between the State and the Union government. The amendments, it said, authorised the L-G to withhold consent from bills that, in his judgment, may be "incidentally" outside the scope of the Assembly's legislative powers.

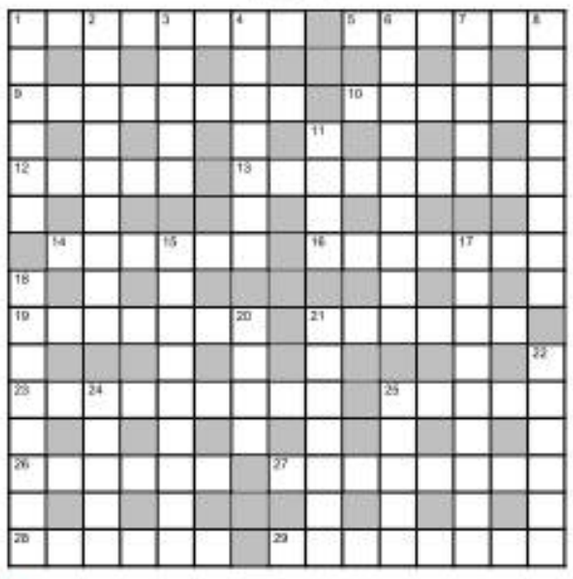
The Delhi government further sought to argue that the new laws encroach on the scope of the Assembly's core legislative functions by interfering with the power of the House to frame its own rules of business or to hold the government to account which was a core function of any legislature.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD + 13542

(set by Lightning)

Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers in our online grids. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



ACROSS

1 Finally sever lock, move ahead to enter unlawfully (8)
5 Say no to target (6)
9 Skill packing picture with the French grain (8)
10 Happy destroying very old jail (6)
12 Design rusty leather hides (5)
13 Car that doesn't need manual shifting? Transport it to Macau (9)
14 Approximately short line on electronic ring (6)
16 Almost done with cycling one's getting swimwear (7)
19 Chief trader regularly read documents on debt – it's boring (7)
21 Scold bachelor with energy and charge (6)
23 Break leader coming back in period of economic decline (9)
25 One controlling a vehicle losing velocity with machine (5)
26 A vigil with large number to evoke feelings (6)
27 It may be asked of one that is charged after search (8)
28 Makes strenuous effort moving ten into endless road going west (6)
29 Organised entry to a lawyer (8)

DOWN

1 One punching keys in segment of faulty piston (6)
2 Not late, regularly bait with ends of rod – it may get the worm (5,4)
3 Top seven perhaps (5)
4 Rescue in Las Vegas for the most part in order (7)
6 Register to earn rupee for one accepting bets (9)
7 Sex is tiring, partly survive (5)
8 Lets engineer act funnily in small screen show (8)
11 Cut small bill (4)
15 Lookout point where crew on ship used telescopes primarily (5,4)
17 Cashew perhaps – right it is primarily working to provide sustenance (9)
18 Daydream of celebrity look (8)
20 Firstly, short heel is needed for part of leg (4)
21 Forbid silent one leaving ceremonious dinner (7)
22 Pal missing id, partly lazy in a state of agitation (6)
24 Annoy engineer after cutting short worthless material (5)
25 Where music may be recorded with old dance (5)

SUDOKU

	2		1			5		
	3	5					2	7
		7			9			
	5		3	7				
	1	3	6	8	4	7	5	
				5	1		6	
			8			4		
6	9					3	8	
		8			3		7	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13541

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	5	9	3	1	6	7	2	8
7	3	6	5	2	8	9	1	4
8	2	1	7	9	4	3	5	6
9	7	5	8	4	2	6	3	1
6	8	3	1	5	9	2	4	7
2	1	4	6	3	7	5	8	9
3	4	2	9	6	1	8	7	5
1	9	8	2	7	5	4	6	3
5	6	7	4	8	3	1	9	2

FAITH

'Bhu Bhara' explained

The symbolism in the term 'Bhu Bhara,' the burden borne by Goddess Earth, is discussed in the Devi Bhagavata Purana from various angles and from the perception of Bhu Devi herself who faces the brunt of it, pointed out Sri K. Srinivasan in a discourse. At the end of Dwapara Yuga when Kali Yuga is poised to take over, Mother Earth is unable to bear the tremendous pressure on her. Here it is shown that earth derives the power to sustain only through dharma. The word dharma is derived from the root 'dhr, dhar', to bear, to sustain. When dharma is overruled by adharma, the sustainability is lost.

The 'Bhara,' burden, is not just any kind of physical heaviness; it is the subtle weight arising from adharma and selfishness. Goddess Earth meets Indra and explains how the asuras such as Jarasandha, Kamsa, and others are steeped in selfishness and have failed to protect the people and the earth. This has increased the burden on her. She is also terrified of her state as she foresees the advent of Kali in the near future when sin and adharma will thrive. She alludes to the time of early creation when the earth was not hard as it is today and was of a lighter consistency.

It is said that Hiranyaksha rolled the earth and submerged it in the ocean depths. The Lord took the form of Varaha and rescued her and placed her in a stable position in conjunction with other planets. Since then, earth has become solid and firm but this has resulted in causing unbearable burden on her. She confesses that she would have been happy in rasatala if only the Lord had not rescued her. She then would not have had to bear the load of vice at the present times. With the fall in the standard of dharma in each Yuga, the burden on earth keeps increasing.

Russia stops gas supply to 2 NATO nations

European leaders decry the move as 'blackmail'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
POKROVSK

Russia cut off natural gas to NATO members Poland and Bulgaria on Wednesday and threatened to do the same to other countries, dramatically escalating its stand-off with the West over the war in Ukraine. European leaders decried the move as "blackmail".

A day after the U.S. and other Western allies vowed to speed more and heavier weapons to Ukraine, the Kremlin used its most most essential export as leverage against two of Kyiv's staunch backers. Gas prices in Europe shot up on the news.

Poland has been a major gateway for the delivery of weapons to Ukraine and confirmed this week that it is sending the country tanks. Bulgaria, under a new liberal government that took office last fall, has cut many of its old ties to Moscow and supported sanctions against Russia over its invasion.

Cutting the flow: Gazprom said it was shutting off the two countries because they refused to pay in Russian rubles. • AFP

The gas cuts do not immediately put the two countries in dire trouble. Poland has been working for several years to line up other sources of energy, and the continent is heading into summer, making gas less essential for households.

Yet the cut-off and the Kremlin warning that other countries could be next sent shivers of worry through the 27-nation European Union.

Western leaders and analysts portrayed the move by Russia as a bid to divide the Western allies and undermine their unity in support of Ukraine.

"It comes as no surprise that the Kremlin uses fossil fuels to try to blackmail us," said EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. "Today, the Kremlin failed once again in his attempt to sow division amongst member states. The era of Russian fossil fuel in Europe is coming to an end."

State-controlled Russian giant Gazprom said it was shutting off the two countries because they refused to pay in Russian rubles, as President Vladimir Putin had demanded.

Fatih Birol, executive director of the Paris-based International Energy Agency, said the cut-off was a "weaponisation of energy supplies".

Ex-Marine freed in prisoner swap

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

Russia and the U.S. have carried out an unexpected prisoner exchange in a time of high tensions, trading a Marine veteran jailed by Moscow for a convicted Russian drug trafficker serving a long prison sentence in America.

While Russia released Trevor Reed, an American imprisoned for nearly three years, the U.S. returned Konstantin Yaroshenko, a Russian pilot who had been serving a 20-year federal prison sentence in Connecticut for conspiracy to smuggle cocaine into the U.S. after he was arrested in Liberia in 2010 and extradited to the U.S.

Sri Lanka's big businesses mount pressure on govt.

They seek swift, critical response to the economic crisis

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

It is not just Sri Lanka's angry citizens and political Opposition who are challenging the Rajapaksa administration's "failed" response to the country's dire economic condition. Increasingly, prominent capitalists and big businesses are shedding their habitual caution and openly criticising the political impasse that is further threatening the country's crashing economy.

MAS Holdings, among the biggest names in the apparel industry in the region, issued a statement last week "unconditionally supporting" protesters' call for change and good governance, and urging leaders "to heed the voice of the people and act on it".

As the largest private sector employer and exporter in Sri Lanka – garment exports are crucial to the island's foreign revenue – MAS reiterated "the need for immediate and decisive action to resolve the current economic and social crisis, in a peaceful and sustainable manner".

For more than a fortnight now, citizens have been protesting near Colombo's seafront, amplifying a demand that earlier emerged in spontaneous, scattered public protests across the country. "Gota go home", "Rajapaksas go home," they chant, asking President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his elder brother and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to quit, taking responsibility for the unprecedented economic crisis.

People protesting in Colombo. • AFP

The widespread resentment has prompted even big businesses that rarely confront the government to speak up. The private sector leaders are explicitly backing the ongoing anti-government protests, while seeking a swift and critical response from those in power.

Sri Lanka's largest listed company John Keells Holdings has expressed solidarity with the "peaceful protesters". Calling for "decisive action" from the leadership, the company cautioned authorities that "social unrest" could continue if there is no "sustainable solution" in response to the growing calls for change and good governance.

Apart from large-scale manufacturers and multinational corporations, traditional business houses are also weighing in. Sri Lanka's pioneer biscuit manufacturer Maliban said it extends its "fullest support" to the "peaceful and respectful social movement calling for change".

"We also note with quiet admiration, the deep resilience and cultured restraint of our Sri Lankan public and notably our aspiring youth, as we stand in unison with their noble aspirations to guide Sri Lanka to regain our lost glory and place of pride; built on sound transparent policies, good governance and apolitical approach based on mutual respect among all stakeholders," the company said in a statement.

Last week, the Joint Chambers, an amalgam of the country's chambers of commerce and industry, wrote to Mr. Gotabaya, voicing concern over the "political deadlock", consequent to the ruling brothers' reluctance to step down, and the Opposition's rejection of Mr. Gotabaya's offer to form a national government under his presidency. While welcoming the government's talks with the International Monetary Fund, the private sector interlocutors said: "The Joint Chambers are however concerned that the current political deadlock coupled with growing public unrest could potentially derail the actions being taken to resolve the serious economic crisis faced by the country."

Earlier this month, Sri Lanka announced a default on its $51-billion foreign debt, ahead of talks with the IMF. Authorities also floated the rupee in March, following which its value has dropped drastically, to nearly 340 against a U.S. dollar [official buying rate], and to well over 400 in the black market. While Colombo awaits news on the IMF's conditional assistance, the government is struggling to cope despite bilateral assistance from partners, including India and China, as its foreign reserves are drying up. The President's office on Tuesday said the World Bank would extend $600 million assistance to Sri Lanka to meet emergency medical needs, towards food supplies and cooking gas.

China urges Pak. to crack down on terror outfits

Those behind Karachi suicide attack will pay the price, Beijing says

ANANTH KRISHNAN
HONG KONG

China on Wednesday called on Pakistan to "resolutely crack down" on terror outfits in the wake of a suicide attack in Karachi on Tuesday that killed three Chinese teachers and one Pakistani national.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry in a statement said China "strongly condemns and expresses great indignation over this major terrorist attack, conveys deep condolences to the victims and sympathies to the injured and bereaved families", State media reported, adding that the Chinese Foreign Ministry and missions in Pakistan "will continue to urge relevant Pakistani departments to deal with the aftermath, treat the injured and resolutely crack down on the terrorist organisations involved".

Thorough probe

"The blood of the Chinese people should not be shed in vain and those behind this incident will pay the price," the Foreign Ministry said.

China's Assistant Foreign Minister Wu Jianghao also "made an urgent phone call to the Pakistani Ambassador to China to express grave concerns", State media said, adding that "he demanded that the Pakistani side should immediately make thorough investigation of the incident, apprehend and punish the perpetrators to the full extent of the law, and take all possible measures to ensure the safety of Chinese citizens in Pakistan and prevent such incidents from happening again".

Grim reminder: A view of the passenger van which was damaged in the suicide blast in Karachi on Tuesday. • REUTERS

Strongly condemning the attack, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said "nothing will undermine China-Pakistan friendship". The blast targeted a van carrying teachers to the Confucius Institute at the University of Karachi.

To underline the seriousness with which Pakistan was taking the attack, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif visited the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad to express his condolences and assure Chinese companies and nationals in Pakistan of their safety.

The suicide attack was claimed by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). Chinese analysts called for tough measures to retaliate against the group.

"The BLA will definitely be more resolutely annihilated," Hu Xijin, commentator and former editor of the Communist Party-run *Global Times*, said.

"I support Chinese military to launch direct air strikes against this terrorist organisation's camp after getting approval of the Pakistani government."

China has in the past prodded Pakistan's security forces to target groups such as the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), including through air strikes on their camps. Beijing, however, is unlikely to directly involve itself in actions.

Junta court jails Suu Kyi for 5 years for corruption

Deposed leader facing 10 more cases

REUTERS
NAYPYIDAW

A court in military-ruled Myanmar on Wednesday sentenced deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi to five years in jail after finding her guilty in the first of 11 corruption cases against her, according to a source with the knowledge of the proceedings.

The Nobel laureate, who led Myanmar for five years before being forced from power in a coup in early 2021, has been charged with at least 18 offences, which carry a combined maximum jail term of nearly 190 years if found guilty.

The judge in the capital Naypyidaw handed down the verdict within moments of the court convening, said the source, who declined to be identified because the trial is being held behind closed doors, with information restricted.

Aung San Suu Kyi

The case centred on allegations that Ms. Suu Kyi, 76, had accepted 11.4 kg gold and $6,00,000 from her protege-turned-accuser, former Yangon Chief Minister Phyo Min Thein.

China reports first human case of H3N8 bird flu

'Risk of spread among people is low'

REUTERS
BEIJING

China has recorded its first human infection with the H3N8 strain of bird flu, but the risk of its spread among people is low, the health authority said.

The variant was found in a four-year-old boy from Henan. The boy showed fever and other symptoms on April 5, the National Health Commission said in a statement on Tuesday. The child had been in contact with chickens and crows raised at his home, it added in a statement.

The H3N8 variant is common in horses and dogs and has even been found in seals. No human cases of H3N8 have been reported.

Whole genome sequence analyses indicate that the H3N8 virus in this human case is a reassortant, with genes from viruses that have been detected previously in poultry and wild birds,said Nicola Lewis, an influenza expert at the Royal Veterinary College in Britain.

The virus warrants expanded surveillance, said Erik Karlsson, deputy head of the virology unit at the Institut Pasteur in Cambodia.

KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
(Varahi Hydro Electric Project)
CIN No: U85110KA1970SGC001919
No.: KPCL/2022-23/PS/WORK_INDENT12255 Date:25.04.2022
ABSTRACT BID NOTIFICATION
(Through e-Procurement Platform)
Tenders are invited for the work of **"Design, Manufacture, Supply, Retrofit and Commissioning of Mani Dam Power House Unit-2 Turbine Rotor"** at an estimated Cost of Rs. **1,43,71,401/-** inclusive of GST. Bidders can access the bid document on website **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** **EMD : Rs. 2,15,600/-.** Last date for submission of completed bids : **24.05.2022 upto 16.00 Hrs.** Further details can be had from the **Executive Engineer(O&M), Mani, KPCL, Masthikatte- 577425,** Shivamogga, Karnataka State. Phone: 08185-265222, Mobile : 9449598851, e-mail : eeomkpcl@gmail.com

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of Chief Health Officer, J.C. Road, Ideal Homes Community, R.R. Nagara, Bengaluru - 560 098.
No: HO(RRN)TEN-MC/01-06/22-23 Date: 25.04.2022
INVITATION FOR TENDERS THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT NOTIFICATION
Sealed tenders in prescribed forms are invited from the registered and Experienced manpower agency/firms for the following works:
Nature of work: Providing Manpower and Vehicular services for -MC activities across various subdivisions of RR Nagar Zone in item wise packages as specified below:

SL. No.	Tender Number	Package Number	Name of Sub division
1	HO (RRN)/TEN - MC-01/22-23	1	R.R. Nagara
2	HO (RRN)/TEN - MC-02/22-23	2	Laggere
3	HO (RRN)/TEN - MC-03/22-23	3	Lakshmidevinagara
4	HO (RRN)/TEN - MC-04/22-23	4	Yashavanthapura
5	HO (RRN)/TEN - MC-05/22-23	5	Kengeri
6	HO (RRN)/TEN - MC-06/22-23	6	Herohalli

(* Bidders/Contractors obstructing or approaching court shall not be continued)
The prescribed tender forms along with all annexure, the particulars of the terms and conditions can be downloaded from the e-procurement portal http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in. EMD 3% of total tender value of the item wise package.
1) Issuing of Tender documents **02/05/2022** at **4:00** pm. 2) Pre-bid meeting **12/05/2022** at **3:00** pm @ O/o Health Officer (R.R. Nagara) 3) Last date for the receipt of completed tenders **21/05/2022** at upto **4:00** pm. 4) Date & time of opening the technical bids **23/05/2022** at **11:00** am.
Sd/- Health Officer (R.R. Nagara)
STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD
No.5/6, 5th Floor, Jalabhavana, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru-560029.
Tel : 080 – 26539004 / 41106504
e-mail: cekwbbng@gmail.com Website: https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in
KWB/TEC/CE(B)/2nd Stg HSD-UGD Bal Works/132/2022-23 Date : 27-04-2022
CORRIGENDUM
Sub:- Tender for the work of "Providing UGD House Service Connections, strengthening of existing UGD network and allied works under the savings of 2nd stage UGD scheme to Hosadurga Town" on Lumpsum basis.
Ref:- Tender notification No.KWB/TEC/CE(B)/2nd Stg UGD Bal Works/2498/2021-22 Dt: 25-03-2022 & Work Indent No: KUWSDB/2021-22/WS/WORK_INDENT 3127.
Revised Calendar of Events:-
1) Last date and time for receipt of tenders in e-procurement portal : 07-05-2022 up to 17.30 hours. 2) Date and time of opening of tenders in e-procurement portal : 11-05-2022 after 11.00 hours. The other terms and conditions in the notification issued remain unaltered.
Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER, KUWS & D BOARD, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/297/KAR/22-23
COVID-19 - DON'T SPREAD RUMOURS. ACT RESPONSIBLY. AVOID INFECTION-NOT THE INFECTED.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Social Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY. e-Tender Notice
Tender No: 02,03/SE/PHC/TSR/2022-23. **KIIFB** - Augmentation of CWSS to Nattika Firka Phase-I Package 1 - Design, Construction and Commissioning of 9m dia intake well cum pump house, 26MLD Water Treatment Plant at Vellani, and allied works, restoration of roads after laying pipes and allied works. (At the Risk & Cost of the Contractor), **JJM**-2021-22 - Providing Distribution Network and FHTC to Chazhur Panchayath.EMD : Rs. 5,00,000/- Tender fee : Rs. 17,700. Last Date for submitting Tender : 17-05-2022 03:00:pm.
Phone : 0487-2423230 Superintending Engineer
Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in PH Circle
www.etenders.kerala.gov.in **KWA-JB-GL-6-112-2022-23** Thrissur

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(An Institute of National Importance under Ministry of Education, Government of India)
BHOPAL - 462003 (M.P.)
Advt.No.IIITBPL/Faculty Rectt./2022/243 Dated:26/04/2022
RECRUITMENT NOTICE FOR FACULTY POSITIONS
Indian Institute of Information Technology Bhopal is an institute of national importance in Not-for-Profit Public Private Partnership (N-PPP) mode setup by the Ministry of Education, Government of India with Government of Madhya Pradesh and Rajiv Gandhi Proudyogiki Vishwavidyalaya (RGPV), Bhopal as industry Partner. The Institute invites applications for the recruitment to the posts of **Associate Professor (Regular) and Assistant Professor (On Contract basis)** in the prescribed format. Candidates are required to submit their application in offline mode. Last date for submission of application form for the said posts is 10th June 2022 (Friday) upto 5.00 P.M. The recruitment details process may be referred in the advertisement uploaded on the website of the institute **(www.iiitbhopal.ac.in)**
MENTOR REGISTRAR

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED
NOTICE INVITING BIDS NO.01 & 02 (2022-23)
RVPN invites competitive BIDS for following Civil works from experienced, reputed contractors registered in appropriate class with RRVPNL & A or AA class in Central/ State Government Department and their undertakings and registered in GST department. The Tender/bid shall only be submitted through online tendering system of **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**. The interested bidders shall have to be enrolled/ registered with portal of **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** for participating in the bidding process. S. No. 01 to 23 (NIB No. 01(2022-23) & 01 to 18. (NIB No. 02 (2022-23) UBN No.
(VPN2223WSOB00140) to (VPN2223WSOB00145)
(VPN2223WSOB00147) to (VPN2223WSOB00181)
RRVPN/TR-5428/2022
Raj.Samvad/C/22/1099 **Superintending Engineer (Civil), Jodhpur**

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Department of Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development
Office of the Executive Engineer, MI & GWD Division, Mandya
TENDER NOTIFICATION NO:01/2022-23, Dt : 22.04.2022
Item Wise Tenders are invited from registered and eligible contractors under " e - Procurement "Portal as per the terms and conditions prescribed in standard tender bid documents KW-4. Under the Head of Account 4702: Modernization of Tanks there are 06 No's of works, 4702: Check Dam & Pikeups there are 02 No's of works and 4702: Lift irrigation Scheam there are 03 No of work, amount put to tender ranging from as low as Rs. 350.00 Lakhs to as high as Rs.1000.00 Lakhs. Any information regarding this tender may be obtained from this office up to dated : 02-05-2022 during office hours. The tenders may be uploaded (Technical and Financial bids to be uploaded separately) with the prescribed E.M.D and requisite documents through website "www.eproc.karnataka.govt.in " upto dated **: 04.05.2022 up to 17-00 Hours.** Technical bids of the bidders will be opened on **dated : 06.05.2022 at 11.00 AM.** Financial bids of the bidders will be opened on **dated : 09.05.2022 at 11-00 AM.** All the rights are reserved for postponement or cancellation of all works or any of the work of this tender by the under signed. Terms and conditions required for the each work is published in the "e - Procurement" Tender Portal. Any additional information is available at the office of the undersigned. Any corrections regarding the works will be published in " e - Procurement" portal only.
Sd/-Executive Engineer, MI & GWD Division, Mandya.
DIPR/AD-MDY/MCA/35/2022-23

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(An Institute of National Importance under Ministry of Education, Government of India)
BHOPAL - 462003 (M.P.)
Advt.No.IIITBpl/Non-Teaching Rectt./2022/244 Dated:26/04/2022
RECRUITMENT NOTICE FOR ASSISTANT REGISTRAR
Indian Institute of Information Technology Bhopal is an institute of national importance in Not-for-Profit Public Private Partnership (N-PPP) mode setup by the Ministry of Education, Government of India with Government of Madhya Pradesh and Rajiv Gandhi Proudyogiki Vishwavidyalaya (RGPV), Bhopal as industry Partner. The Institute invites applications in prescribed format for filling up **one (01-UR) post of Assistant Registrar** on direct recruitment basis. Candidates are required to submit their application in offline mode. Last date for submission of application form for the said posts is 10th June 2022 (Friday) upto 5.00 P.M. The recruitment details may be referred in the advertisement uploaded on the website of the institute **(www.iiitbhopal.ac.in)**
MENTOR REGISTRAR

ओएनजीसी ONGC
EASTERN OFFSHORE ASSET & HPHT ASSET, KAKINADA (A.P.)
GLOBAL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
ONGC invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from global Oil & Gas companies with requisite technical expertise and financial strength to join as partner (with Participative Interest) for firming up a viable strategy in the following fields.(A) **Development of the Deen Dayal West (DDW): High Pressure High Temperature Field in KG-OSN-2001/3 Block (Offshore -Bay of Bengal) to put the field on production.**(B) **Appraisal and development of the Ultra deep discoveries in Cluster-III, NELP Block KG-DWN-98/2.** (A)**DDW:** Office of Asset Manager, EOA & HPHT Asset, Kakinada latest by **18-05-2022**. Advance copy may be sent by mail at **ddw@ongc.co.in** (B) **Cluster-III:** Office of Basin Manager, KG-PG Basin, Chennai. CMDA Tower-I, No.1, Gandhi Irwin Road, Egmore, Chennai-600008 latest by **18-05-2022**.Advance copy may be sent by mail at **bm_kg@ongc.co.in**. For details of Expression of interest (EOI) and Scope of work please logon to our website **https://tenders.ongc.co.in**
HAR EK KAAM DESH KE NAAM

MARKET WATCH

	27-04-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	56,819	-0.94
US Dollar	76.57	-0.01
Gold	51,233	-0.42
Brent oil	104.73	-0.36

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	887.30	-22.20
Apollo Hosp	4522.95	-101.10
Asian Paints	3148.35	22.70
Axis Bank	765.90	-9.10
Bajaj Auto	3905.65	13.55
Bajaj Finserv	14826.40	-607.95
Bajaj Finance	6714.10	-526.45
Bharti Airtel	752.50	-3.80
BPCL	366.50	-6.35
Britannia Ind	3338.25	-34.45
Cipla	977.75	-0.65
Coal India	187.50	-3.90
Divis Lab	4530.60	11.00
Dr Reddys Lab	4077.05	-77.50
Eicher Motors	2655.45	6.15
Grasim Ind	1700.20	-17.80
HCL Tech	1095.60	1.30
HDFC	2218.70	-11.50
HDFC Bank	1372.55	0.50
HDFC Life	547.65	-2.20
Hero MotoCorp	2500.00	92.75
Hindalco	492.30	-1.15
Hind Unilever	2145.10	-3.25
ICICI Bank	736.70	-17.05
Indusind Bank	974.50	-5.95
Infosys	1552.80	-28.20
ITC	257.50	-1.45
JSW Steel	720.60	-0.60
Kotak Bank	1741.50	-1.20
L&T	1677.05	-22.90
M&M	926.85	-13.30
Maruti Suzuki	7788.40	-118.35
Nestle India Ltd.	18223.00	-192.75
NTPC	155.65	-1.35
ONGC	164.85	-2.10
PowerGrid Corp	229.30	-2.30
Reliance Ind	2778.35	2.70
SBI Life	1074.20	-20.65
State Bank	497.25	-8.25
Shree Cement	25574.80	-598.50
Sun Pharma	906.10	-11.95
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	798.60	-23.45
Tata Motors	430.25	-4.65
Tata Steel	1246.70	13.10
TCS	3561.20	14.90
Tech Mahindra	1261.25	-14.20
Titan	2492.35	-55.85
UltraTech Cement	6548.45	-111.75
UPL	798.40	-13.95
Wipro	518.95	-10.30

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on April 27

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	76.33	76.65
Euro	80.99	81.33
British Pound	96.03	96.44
Japanese Yen (100)	59.68	59.93
Chinese Yuan	11.65	11.70
Swiss Franc	79.17	79.55
Singapore Dollar	55.35	55.59
Canadian Dollar	59.44	59.71
Malaysian Ringitt	17.50	17.59
Australian Dollar	54.55	54.78

Source: Indian Bank

LIC share sale price band set at ₹902-₹949; govt. to divest 3.5%

Centre says cut size in view of current environment, expects to raise ₹21,000 cr.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Centre said on Wednesday it had reduced the size of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) Initial Public Offering (IPO) in light of the current 'volatile market' environment.

Despite the "right sizing", the LIC IPO, which would open on May 4, would be India's biggest ever, Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary, Department of Investment & Public Asset Management told reporters at a press conference in Mumbai. The share sale, which is expected to help raise about ₹21,000 crore for the government, would close on May 9. The anchor investor portion would open on May 2.

Easy on the market: The LIC IPO will not crowd out capital and monetary supply, says Pandey. •REUTERS

The Centre has fixed the price band at ₹902 to ₹949 per equity share of LIC. While policy holders would get a discount of ₹60 per share, eligible employees, and retail investors would get a discount of ₹45 per share. Mr. Pandey said the government decided to dilute 3.5% stake in LIC, from the earlier plan of 5%, considering the current (volatile) environment. He added the Centre had no plans to come out with a follow-on public offer in the next one year. SEBI had given an exemption, allowing a reduction in the IPO size, he clarified.

He said the decision to list LIC was taken considering factors like market demand, reduced market volatility, domestic fund flows and LIC's performance.

"LIC IPO will not crowd out capital, monetary supply," he said. Investors can bid for a minimum of 15 equity shares and in multiples of 15 shares thereafter. The IPO is via an offer-for-sale of up to 22,13,74,920 shares.

Centre owes ₹78,704 cr. GST dues to States

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre is yet to remit ₹78,704 crore in outstanding Goods and Services Tax (GST) compensation dues to States, equivalent to four months of compensation under the indirect tax regime introduced in July 2017, the Finance Ministry said, citing 'inadequate balance in the fund'.

"The pending amount will also be released as and when amount from cess accrues in the compensation fund," the Ministry said. "Normally, compensation for ten months of April-January of any financial year is released during that year and the compensation of February-March is released only in the next financial year," it added.

Centre enhances subsidy for non-urea fertilizers

Move comes amid global price surge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With urea and fertilizer prices shooting up in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an enhancement in subsidies on non-urea fertilisers for the upcoming Kharif crop, to ₹60,939 crore.

While the government fixes the retail price of urea and subsidises producers based on the difference between costs and the fixed selling price, it pays a subsidy to non-urea fertiliser makers on the basis of nutrient-based rates.

"The increase in the international prices of Di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and its raw materials have been primarily absorbed by the Union Government," the Chemicals and Fertilizers Ministry said.

The subsidy will be ₹2,501 per bag on DAP, instead of the existing subsidy of ₹1,650 per bag, which is a 50% increase over last year's subsidy rates.

The increase in the prices of DAP and its raw material is in the range of about 80%.

Tata's Air India aims to buy AirAsia India

REUTERS
BENGALURU

Tata Group-owned Air India has proposed to buy the entire equity share capital of low-cost carrier AirAsia India, in which Tata has a majority stake, to merge into a single airline, according to an application with India's competition commission.

Tatas bought state-run carrier Air India in a $2.4 billion equity-and-debt deal, regaining ownership after almost 70 years.

Tata Sons has an 83.67% stake in AirAsia India.

"This was on expected lines as it makes no sense for the Tata Group to own stakes in separate airlines," said Vinamra Longani, head of operations at Sarin & Co., a law firm.

Titan aims to slash China eyewear frame imports

Topline may cross ₹1,000 cr.: Bhaumik

N. ANAND
CHENNAI

Titan Company's eyewear division has drawn up plans to reduce its dependency on China for frames and sunglasses progressively to about 50%, said a top company executive.

"China is the hub of eyewear," said Saumen Bhaumik, CEO, Eyewear.

Saumen Bhaumik

"India imports about 90-95% of frames and sunglasses from China. We wanted to be independent of China and the pandemic helped us make some good progress."

According to him, Titan's dependence on China frames and sunglasses had reduced drastically from 90-95% to 70% and the company was planning to bring it down further to 50% in the coming years. It was also encouraging the vendors to get prepared for scale and good quality as it wants to be 'China-free' in the long run.

To a question about topline, he said it was likely to cross the ₹1,000-crore mark (consumer price level) in FY23 against ₹600 crore and ₹940 crore posted in FY21 and FY20, respectively.

HUL net profit rose 9% in March quarter

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Hindustan Unilever Ltd. said fourth-quarter net profit grew 9% to ₹2,327 crore from a year earlier, due to 'strong, all-round' performance.

Turnover rose 10% to ₹13,190 crore with underlying volumes staying flat.

For FY22, net profit climbed 11% to ₹8,818 crore, while turnover too rose 11% to ₹50,336 crore. Underlying volume growth was 3%. The company's board proposed a final dividend of ₹19 per share.

"In challenging circumstances, we have grown competitively and protected our business model by maintaining margins in a healthy range," said CEO and MD Sanjiv Mehta.

'States urged to step up coal imports for 3 years'

'Pre-summer inventory at 9-year low'

REUTERS
NEW DELHI

India has urged its States to step up coal imports for the next three years to build up inventories and satisfy demand, four sources told Reuters, a move set to benefit global prices of the fuel, already running high because of war in Ukraine.

The decision to boost imports underscores the severity of India's fuel crisis as coal inventories are at the lowest pre-summer levels in at least nine years and electricity demand is seen rising at the fastest pace in almost four decades.

India, the world's second-largest coal importer, could drive up global demand until 2025, as Power Minister R.K. Singh has set a longer timeline for a federal push to increase imports that had until now been seen as a temporary measure.

"The States were asked to continue importing because the private sector will take till at least early 2025 to produce significant output," said a Power Ministry official who attended Mr. Singh's meeting with State officials on Tuesday.

SEBI eases transmission process rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

With an aim to simplify the procedure for transmission of securities, SEBI has revised the existing threshold limit for simplified documents to ₹5 lakh from ₹2 lakh currently for securities held in physical mode per listed issuer.

Also, the threshold in this regard for securities held in the dematerialised mode for each beneficiary account has been increased to ₹15 lakh from the present level of ₹5 lakh.

Legal Heirship Certificate or equivalent issued by competent government authority would be an acceptable document for transmission of securities, the regulator said in a notification issued on Tuesday.

IN BRIEF

'Will meet 71% of power needs via green energy'

CHENNAI

Ramco Cements on Wednesday said it was ahead of the industry in utilisation of green energy for clinker production. Inclusive of the wind energy being used for production, Ramco said it will be meeting 71% of power requirement for clinker production via green energy.

Bharti acquires 7% stake in Cnergee Technologies

NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel said it had acquired about 7% stake' in Mumbai-based cloud-based networking solutions provider Cnergee Technologies under the Airtel Startup Accelerator Program. This would enable Bharti to sharpen its Network as a Service proposition for small and medium businesses looking to accelerate shift to cloud-based applications, Bharti said in a statement.

Maruti eyes expansion in rural markets

Rising rural incomes, motorisation to drive growth, says Srivastava

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

Buoyed by a faster pace of sales growth in rural India compared with urban centres, the country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki is aiming to expand sales operations to cover an additional two lakh villages.

This is because it expects the growth trend to continue driven by factors such as rising rural incomes and increasing motorisation.

The company has till now sold cars in about 4.4 lakh villages out of the more than 6.4 lakh villages in India, Shashank Srivastava, senior executive director (Marketing and Sales), Maruti Suzuki India, told *The Hindu*.

"For us, the rural markets did better than urban last year...Rural markets have now been outperforming urban markets since 2007 when we started monitoring the sales separately, except for a couple of years."

The company sold 5,47,490 vehicles in the rural market in 2019-20, accounting for 38.5% share of the total sales. This increased to 5,83,300 units (40.9% sales share) in 2020-21 and 5,91,800 (43.6% sales share) in 2021-22, when the overall industry was struggling.

"If you take the last three years, the urban growth has been negative, otherwise both markets have been growing with rural growing at a faster pace," he said.

"This trend will continue largely because of factors such as rising rural income, increased pace of motorisation...monsoons have also been good in the past couple of years," he said.

"We have increased our rural manpower or RDSE (rural dealer sales executives) from about 11,000 people in 2015-16 to more than 17,000 today," he said.

In demand

In 2021-22, Maruti saw strong rural demand for models such as Alto 800 (92,000 units), Swift (82,000 units), WagonR (77,000 units), Dzire (59,000 units) and Eeco (58,000 units).

Mr Srivastava added Maruti Suzuki, which has seen its market share drop to 43.38% in FY22 from 47.7% in FY21 amid production challenges owing to the pandemic, will focus on SUVs as well as hatchbacks, as it aims to get back to 50% market share in the domestic passenger vehicle market.

TVS, Rapido ink hyper-local mobility pact

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

TVS Motor Company on Wednesday announced a strategic partnership with auto and bike taxi aggregator Rapido to leverage synergies of their respective businesses in the fast-moving mobility market.

Hyper-local mobility had boomed into a potential $158 billion opportunity, the two-wheeler maker said. By signing the MoU, both firms are bringing together their strength in mobility and seamless technology to deliver a winning proposition to a demanding user base, TVS Motor said.

India Post bank gets nod for ₹820-crore funding

₹500-cr. future infusion also approved

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved additional funding of ₹820 crore for setting up of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) branches for FY21 to FY23, taking the total outlay to ₹2,255 crore.

The Cabinet "has approved the revision of project outlay for setting up of IPPB from ₹1,435 crore to ₹2,255 crore as equity infusion to meet regulatory requirement," according to an official statement.

The Cabinet had also granted in-principle approval for infusion of funds to the tune of ₹500 crore in future to help meet regulatory requirements and technological upgradation.

The objective of the IPPB project, the government said, was to build the most accessible, affordable and trusted bank for the common man.

SPORT

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Edris and Obiri to headline TCS World 10K

Reigning 5000m World Champions Muktar Edris and Hellen Obiri will be the star attractions at the TCS World 10K which is scheduled to be held here on May 15.

Edris, from Ethiopia, and Obiri, from Kenya, are both two-time defending World champions (2017 and 2019) over 5000m.

Obiri is also a two-time Olympic silver medallist, finishing second over the same distance at Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020. This will be the 32-year-old's first visit to India.

The World Athletics Elite Label race in Bengaluru will also welcome the 2017 world cross country champion Irene Cheptai, who had won 2017 TCS World 10K.

Cheptai has been in fine form of late, coming up with two strong second-place finishes in the New York and Prague half-marathons held in the last two months.

Muktar Edris. •FILE PHOTO

Hellen Obiri. •FILE PHOTO

Misaka beats Bosch

Misaka FC beat Bosch FC 3-1 in the BDFA C-division football league on Wednesday.

The results: Misaka 3 (Vijay 21, Jayatish 63, Yogesh 70+5) bt Bosch 1 (D. Prathip 39).

Shafi slots in four in Rebels Phoenix's big win

Md. Shafi scored four goals as Rebels Phoenix FC thrashed Benson FC 10-0 in the KSFA C-division league on Wednesday.

The results: Rebels Phoenix 10 (Md. Shafi 5, 14, 19, 20, Ariek Thapa 22, 23, Tyson Syrti 42, S. Anand 44, Bed Deokar 53, Gautam Rabha 60) bt Benson 0; Hassan 1 (C.R. Ranjeeth 15) bt Blues Football Academy 0; Agni Puthra 0 drew with BYFL 0; Mysore Vijayanagara 1 (Sachidananda 40) bt Kodagu Colts 0.

All-round show by Krishna and Shardul

All-round efforts from Krishna Karthik (42 & 3/34) and Shardul Joshi (39 & 3/17) helped Gopalan Sports Centre defeat CCE by 39 runs in an under-12 match in the Tiger Cup cricket tournament on Wednesday.

The scores: U-14: Gopalan 224/5 in 30 overs (G.K. Saivarun 57, Kush Kumar 51, Amegh 42) bt CCE 88 in 23.2 overs (Bhavik Bansal 3/4).

U-12: Gopalan Sports Centre 190 in 28.4 overs (Shardul Joshi 39, Krishna Karthik 42, Mihir Patankar 31, Aaav Bafna 4/28) bt CCE 151 in 29.4 overs (Tanshh Krishna 68, Shardul Joshi 3/17, Krishna Karthik 3/34).

India in quarterfinals

WJT

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

India qualified for the quarterfinals with a 2-1 victory over Jordan in the Asia-Oceania World Junior Tennis under-14 boys tournament at the DLTA Complex on Wednesday. India, which finished second in the group, will play Korea in the last eight.

The results (league): Group-A: Korea bt Australia 2-1; Lebanon bt Syria 2-1.

Group-B: India bt Jordan 2-1 (Arnav Paparkar bt Amir Jaber 6-0, 6-2; Tanussh Ghildyal lost to Malek El-Qurneh 4-6, 2-6; Aditya Mor & Arnav bt El-Qurneh & Jaber 6-3, 6-4); Japan bt Uzbekistan 3-0.

Group-C: Thailand bt Iran 2-1; Hong Kong bt Malaysia 3-0; **Group-D:** Indonesia bt Sri Lanka 3-0; Kazakhstan bt Pakistan 3-0.

Goal-fest: De Bruyne ghosts in behind a static Real defence to head home City's opener. •REUTERS

Man City noses ahead of Real

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MANCHESTER

Manchester City beat record 13-time winner Real Madrid 4-3 in an epic Champions League semifinal first leg on Tuesday, with a Karim Benzema brace keeping the Spanish giant's hopes alive going into the return.

Kevin De Bruyne, Gabriel Jesus, Phil Foden and Bernardo Silva all netted for City at the Etihad Stadium with Benzema scoring twice – including a penalty – and Vinicius also on target for Madrid. The teams will meet in Madrid in the second leg on May 4.

The result: Semifinal, first leg: Manchester City 4 (De Bruyne 2, Jesus 11, Foden 53, Silva 74) bt Real Madrid 3 (Benzema 33, 82-pen, Vinicius 55).

Bopanna advances

SPORTS BUREAU

Rohan Bopanna and Matwe Middelkoop beat Philipp Kohlschreiber and Max Hans Rehberg 6-1, 6-4 to make the doubles quarterfinals of the €597,900 ATP tennis tournament in Munich on Wednesday.

Other results:

$60,000 ITF women, Istanbul: Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Aliona Bolsova Zadoinov (Esp) & Ingrid Neel (US) bt Yuriko Lily Miyazaki (GBR) & Prarthana Thombare 6-1, 6-3.

€45,730 Challenger, Rome: Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Altug Celikbilek & Ergi Kirkin (Tur) bt Sergio Martos Gornes (Esp) & Arjun Kadhe 6-4, 6-7(3), [10-3].

$53,120 Challenger, Savannah, US: First round: JJ Wolf (US) bt Ramkumar Ramanathan 7-6(4), 6-0; Sumit Nagal bt Tung-Lin Wu (Tpe) 6-2, 7-5.

Tewatia and Rashid the heroes as Titans clinch a last-ball thriller

Saha lays the foundation with a 38-ball 68; Umran's scorching five-for, Abhishek and Markram's half-centuries and Shashank's cameo go in vain for Sunrisers

IPL 2022

S. DINAKAR
MUMBAI

Rashid Khan had a forgettable outing thus far in the long night. The formidable leg-spinner had been taken apart by the left-handed Abhishek Sharma who slog-swept his googlies, striking against the turn for three sixes.

Now with Gujarat Titans, he was playing against his former team Sunrisers Hyderabad and had a point to prove.

Top shows: Tewatia and Rashid's stunning assault in the final overs helped Titans snatch victory, shading Umran's sensational spell. • SPORTZPICS FOR IPL

Shot at redemption

The last four deliveries of this Wednesday night humdinger in the Tata-IPL offered a shot at redemption for Rashid.

Rahid needed to score 15 runs off the remaining balls – the side was chasing a daunting 196 – to win it for Gujarat. Beanpole left-armer Marco Jansen was the bowler.

The over's third ball was struck straight over Jansen's head for a six. This was followed by a dot ball as the sphere missed Rashid's flashing blade.

Then, more drama. The fifth delivery was slashed over extra-cover by the inspirational Rashid for a maximum. It was down to three runs off the final ball.

Those in the dug-out were chewing nails. There was tension all around. Kane Williamson had a conversation with Jansen. The mid-wicket was moved wider.

Jansen pitched short and the nerveless Rashid, quick of feet and brave of heart, struck the sphere over a leaping Natarajan for a six over fine-leg.

Innings scan

SRH		GT
38	Dots	34
12	Fours	19
11	Sixes	8
53/2	PP	59/0
9.75	RR	9.95

Next assignment

GT: Apr. 30 vs. **RCB**
Brabourne, 3.30 p.m.

SRH: May 1 vs. **CSK**
MCA Stadium, 7.30 p.m.

Rashid raised his arms in triumph. Against the odds, Titans had 'stolen' a last-ball five-wicket win.

The final barrage actually started from the fifth ball of the 19th over.

T. Natarajan missed his yorker and Rahul Tewatia dumped him for a six. He then took a single of the final delivery.

It was 22 to win off the final over. Jansen's first delivery, a misfired yorker, was sent over the mid-wicket fence for a six. Then Tewatia took a single to backward square-leg.

From here on it was all Rashid.

The left-handed Tewatia's 21-ball unbeaten 40 was a vital effort. A clean striker of the ball, with the ability to innovate, he kept GT in the hunt.

Wriddhiman Saha's 68 of footwork and dare, cuts and pulls, drives and lofted shots, built a platform for GT against a quality attack.

Earlier the red hot Umran Malik bowled with searing intensity and pace on an unresponsive pitch.

Bowling with precision at speeds in excess of 150 kmph, the rhythmic Umran finished with five for 25 – four of his victims were beaten and bowled by the sheer velocity and venom of his swinging full length deliveries.

It was a night of several twists. The fiery Lockie Ferguson saw his last three deliveries of the innings being dismissed by the unsung Shashank Singh for spectacular sixes.

And loose-limbed southpaw Abhishek (65) and the smooth-stroking Aiden Markram (56) found the gaps and cleared the fence to lend substance to the Sunrisers' innings.

This was a thriller, pure and simple. And it exploded at the finish

SCOREBOARD

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Abhishek Sharma b Joseph 65 *(42b, 6x4, 3x6)*, Kane Williamson b Shami 5 *(8b, 1x4)*, Rahul Tripathi 16 *(10b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Aiden Markram c Miller b Dayal 56 *(40b, 2x4, 3x6)*, Nicholas Pooran c Gill b Shami 3 *(5b)*, Washington Sundar run out 3 *(4b)*, Shashank Singh (not out) 25 *(6b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Marco Jansen 8 *(5b, 1x6)*; Extras (w-14): 14; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 195.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-26 (Williamson, 2.5 overs), 2-44 (Tripathi, 4.6), 3-140 (Abhishek, 15.1), 4-147 (Pooran, 16.3), 5-161 (Markram, 17.6), 6-162 (Washington, 18.1).

GUJARAT TITANS
Shami 4-0-39-3, Dayal 4-0-24-1, Joseph 4-0-35-1, Rashid 4-0-45-0, Ferguson 4-0-52-0

GUJARAT TITANS
Wriddhiman Saha b Umran 68 *(38b, 11x4, 1x6)*, Shubman Gill b Umran 22 *(24b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Hardik Pandya c Jansen b Umran 10 *(6b, 2x4)*, David Miller b Umran 17 *(19b, 1x4)*, Rahul Tewatia (not out) 40 *(21b, 4x4, 2x6)*, Abhinav Manohar b Umran 0 *(1b)*, Rashid Khan (not out) 31 *(11b, 4x6)*; Extras (lb-1, w-10): 11; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 199.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-69 (Gill, 7.4 overs), 2-85 (Hardik, 9.2), 3-122 (Saha, 13.2), 4-139 (Miller, 15.5), 5-140 (Abhinav, 15.6).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Bhuvneshwar 4-0-33-0, Jansen 4-0-63-0, Natarajan 4-0-43-0, Washington 4-0-34-0, Umran 4-0-25-5.

Toss: Gujarat Titans.
MoM: Umran.
Titans won by five wkts.

Capitals and Knight Riders seek consistency

Languishing in the bottom half of the table, it's crunch time for both sides

S. DINAKAR
MUMBAI

It's crunch time for both the Delhi Capitals and the Kolkata Knight Riders. A slip here and the fall can be steep.

Their Tata-IPL clash at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday is a face-off between two wounded predators. Both teams have three wins each. KKR, with eight matches, has played a game more. And both teams find themselves in the table's bottom half.

Delhi Capitals with Prithvi Shah – such a joy to watch – David Warner, Rishabh Pant and Rovman Powell, has the batting firepower. The question is have Capitals recovered mentally from the bust-up at the end of their clash against Rajasthan Royals with all that acrimony over a possible no ball for height?

Need of the hour: Pant and Shreyas have to lead from the front in order to improve their teams' fortunes. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

Capitals have a useful pace pack with Khaleel Ahmed, Shardul Thakur and Mustafizur Rahman complementing each other. And the steady Axar Patel and the rejuvenated Kuldeep Yadav can derail sides with contrasting spin.

KKR has still not figured out its best opening combination and which is the right slot for last year's sensation, Venkatesh Iyer.

And 'mystery' spinner Varun Chakravarthy – he hardly plays for his State team Tamil Nadu these days with IPL being his livelihood – is being carted around the park.

Andre Russell still packs a punch with the bat and the ball, Sunil Narine continues to be a miserly wicket-taker, and the wily Tim Southee, a better bowling option than Pat Cummins, can still nick batters out. On the wearing Wankhede pitches of inconsistent bounce, the side that seizes opportunities will win.

TODAY'S MATCH

DELHI CAPITALS vs. KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

WANKHEDE, 7.30 P.M.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 29
DC 13 | KKR 16

Previous meeting
DC won by 44 runs, 2022

STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD)

Kohli will bounce back: Bangar

'He has that fighting spirit to overcome this hiccup'

SPORTS REPORTER

Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) head coach Sanjay Bangar backed Virat Kohli to fight his way out of a recent dip in form.

"Kohli has seen ups and downs in his career. He has that fighting spirit to overcome this hiccup. In terms of his preparation and nets, Kohli keeps it outside his comfort zone – that's his special trait.

"He has the strength to overcome tough situations – that is a praiseworthy quality. He has the mental capacity to overcome this, and win matches for the team," Bangar said, after RCB lost to Rajasthan Royals at Pune on Tuesday.

Not affecting team

Bangar stated that Kohli's poor run has not affected RCB's fortunes.

"We are not dependant on one individual. If you see the games that we've won, everyone has chipped in. We are looking to develop a team in which anyone can rise to the occasion and win matches for us.

"We have glimpses of this in Shahbaz Ahmed.

"Dinesh Karthik and Glenn Maxwell have won matches for us as well.

"The pitches have been difficult to bat on in the first six overs. Most top order batters have struggled," Bangar said.

POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	L	Pts	NRR
Gujarat Titans	8	7	1	14	0.371
Rajasthan Royals	8	6	2	12	0.561
Sunrisers Hyderabad	8	5	3	10	0.600
Lucknow Super Giants	8	5	3	10	0.334
Royal Challengers Bangalore	9	5	4	10	-0.572
Punjab Kings	8	4	4	8	-0.419
Delhi Capitals	7	3	4	6	0.715
Kolkata Knight Riders	8	3	5	6	0.080
Chennai Super Kings	8	2	6	4	-0.538
Mumbai Indians	8	0	8	0	-1.000

After the GT-SRH match on April 27

Jadeja should lead the side with belief and authority

Since becoming CSK captain, he has not been the destructive player he once was

S. DINAKAR
MUMBAI

Captaincy can be a double-edged sword. Some like M.S. Dhoni revel with the additional responsibility.

Others such as Ravindra Jadeja appear to be playing under pressure, with their natural free-flowing game deserting them. It is too early to judge Jadeja's captaincy. He could grow in his new role with time.

But then, he needs to shake away the self doubts and lead the side with belief and authority. And his own performances have to show the way.

Since becoming Chennai Super Kings' captain, the left-handed Jadeja has not been the destructive player he once was.

His explosive batting and daredevilry are missing. Jadeja's form has been middling at best with 112 runs in eight innings at SR 121.73.

The southpaw has not been the marauder of the past, with the ability to close out games with big hits.

With the ball, Jadeja was adept at bowling his four overs with immaculate control, containing and striking. Now he is struggling to bowl his quota.

In eight matches, he has just five wickets at an economy rate of 8.19. He has been bowling without rhythm and confidence.

And some of his captaincy moves have been bizarre. Jadeja, rather inexplicably, failed to give left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner, who impressed by conceding just eight runs in two overs, his four overs against Punjab Kings.

In a game of fine margins, such decisions can be the difference between a victory and a defeat.

Jadeja needs to rediscover his attacking instincts.

Time to deliver: Some of Jadeja's captaincy moves have been bizarre. • SPORTZPICS/ IPL

Slater gets reprieve on mental health grounds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SYDNEY

Former Australian Test batter Michael Slater had charges of domestic violence dismissed on mental health grounds in a Sydney local court on Wednesday.

Magistrate Ross Hudson ordered Slater to undergo a 12-month treatment plan under the care of a doctor.

The 52-year-old Slater, who worked as a television commentator after retiring from international cricket, was charged by New South Wales state police last October with stalking and intimidation of his ex-partner.

He later breached a restraining order by using a mobile phone to call and send dozens of text messages to his ex-partner and, in December, was ordered to check into a mental health facility as a condition of bail.

Slater did not appear in local court on Wednesday.

LIVE TELECAST

Khelo India Games: DD Sports, 6.30 a.m.
NBA: Sports 18, Vh1, MTV, Jio TV & Voot Select, 7.30 a.m.
IPL 2022: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Europa Conference League: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)
Premier League: SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)
Europa League: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD) & & Sony LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday).

Sports Odisha wins big

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHUBANESWAR

Pyari Xaxa struck a hat-trick as Sports Odisha thumped Sirvodem Sports Club 9-1 in an Indian Women's League match on Wednesday.

The results: Sports Odisha 9 bt Sirvodem SC 1.

Indian Arrows 4 bt Odisha Police 0.

Mariya scintillates with National mark

Anna swimmers take honours in 4x100m medley

KHELO VARSITIES

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

Mangalore University's Ann Mariya sparkled in the 87+ kg women's weightlifting event at the Khelo India University Games here on Wednesday. She lifted 129kg to break Manpreet Kaur's clean and jerk national record (128kg) set at the Nationals earlier this year. Mariya, who trains at the SAI here, missed out on equalling her own combined national record (231kg) set at the Nationals.

In the men's 4x100m medley swimming event, Anna upset host Jain – which counted on seasoned performers Srihari Nataraj and Siva Sridhar in its ranks – to clinch gold.

Mariya • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results (finals and winners):
Swimming: Men: 400m IM: Siva Sridhar (Jain) 4:38.98s (MR, Old: 4:47.13s, self, 2020); **4x100m medley relay:** Anna (Ben, Danush Suresh, Benediction Rohit, Adhithya Dinesh) 3:55.07s (MR, Old: 4:06.53s, Delhi, 2020); **200m freestyle:** Anurag Dagar (Panjab) 1:55.75s (MR, Old: 2:01.28, Siddhant Sejwal, 2020); **100m butterfly:** Siva Sridhar (Jain) 56.26s (MR, Old: 56.76s, Mihir Ambre, 2020). **Women: 800m freestyle:** V. Preetha (Bangalore) 10:10.15s; **200m freestyle:** V. Varsha (Madras) 2:18.26s; **100m butterfly:** Shristi Upadhaya (Jadavpur) 1:06.69s (MR, Old: 1:07.36s, Sadhvi Dhuri, 2020); **4x100m medley:** Madras (V. Varsha, Madhumitha Sriram, Priyanga Pugazharasu, Yuvalakshmi Sridevi) 4:59.17s.
Weightlifting: Women: 87+kg: Ann Mariya (Mangalore) Snatch 101kg, clean & jerk 129kg (NR, Old: 128kg, Manpreet Kaur, 2022), total 230kg.
Badminton: Team final: Men: Jain bt SRM 3-2 (Shamanth Kidiyoor bt Kavin Thangam 19-21, 21-16, 21-17; Raghu Mariswamy lost to Rithvik Sanjeevi S 17-21, 15-21; Rohith lost to Hari Arunesh 23-25, 12-21; Raghu Mariswamy & Sai Pratheek bt Mauryan & Arjun Krishnan 21-14, 22-20; Rohith & Suhas bt Hari Arunesh & Rithvik Sanjeevi S 21-16, 23-21).
Women: Jain University bt Madurai Kamaraj 2-0 (Tanya Hemanth bt Akshaya Arumugam 21-11, 21-16; Janani Anantakumar & Drithi Yatheesh bt Arul Bala Radhakrishnan & Varshini 21-18, 21-17).
Basketball: Women's final: Madras bt SRM 65-48.

Sindhu, Saina and Srikanth advance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MANILA

P.V. Sindhu and Saina Nehwal fought off a strong challenge before winning their respective opening matches, while K. Srikanth progressed with ease in Badminton Asia Championships on Wednesday.

The results: Men: K. Srikanth bt Tze Yong Ng (Mas) 22-20, 21-15; Li Shi Feng (Chn) bt Lakshya Sen 12-21, 21-10, 21-19; Jonatan Christie (Ina) bt B. Sai Praneeth 21-17, 21-13.
Women: P.V. Sindhu bt Pai Yu Po (Tpe) 18-21, 27-25, 21-9; Saina Nehwal bt Sim Yujin (Kor) 21-15, 17-21, 21-13; Akane Yamaguchi (Jpn) bt Aakarshi Kashyap 21-15, 21-9; Yeo Jia Min (Sgp) bt Malvika Bansod 9-21, 21-17, 26-24.
Doubles: Anna Ching Yik Cheong & Teoh Mei Xing (Mas) bt Ashwini Bhat & Shikga Gautam 21-19, 21-12; Pearly Tan & Thinaah Muralitharan (Mas) bt Simran Singhi & Ritika Thaker 21-15, 21-11.

Praggs nails Hansen

Regains lead; van Foreest stuns Carlsen

CHESS

SPORTS BUREAU

Less than 24 hours of losing to Magnus Carlsen, R. Praggnanandhaa regained his form and lead with a crushing 2.5-0.5 triumph over Eric Hansen to become the first player to reach 12 points after five rounds of Oslo Esports Cup online rapid chess tournament in Oslo on Tuesday.

A fourth victory, coupled with Carlsen's 1.5-2.5 defeat to his second Jorden van Foreest, placed Praggnanandhaa three points ahead of Carlsen and four ahead of Jan-Krzysztoff Duda, Le Quang Liem and Foreest.

Praggnanandhaa seized an early advantage when Hansen misread the situation on the ninth move and played a move of sub-optimal strength. Thereafter, it was the tale of the Indian maximising his advantage over the Canadian, who even after giving up a bishop on the 14th move, could not loosen his rival's grip.

Eventually, Hansen resigned on the 49th move.

In the second game, Hansen was better placed after 21 moves but the exchange of queens helped Praggnanandhaa equalise and the position stayed in the balance till the point was split in 72 moves. Soon into the third game, when Praggnanandhaa held sway, it became clear that once again he would not be required to play the fourth round.

The results (fifth round): R. Praggnanandhaa bt Eric Hansen (Can) 2.5-0.5; Jorden van Foreest (Ned) bt Magnus Carlsen (Nor) 2.5-1.5;Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Aze) bt Anish Giri (Ned) 3.5-2.5 (Mamedyarov won the blitz tiebreaker 1.5-0.5); Le Quang Liem (Vie) bt Jan-Krzsztof Duda (Pol) 4-2 (Liem won the two blitz tiebreak games).

India to meet Pakistan in opener

ASIA CUP HOCKEY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAKARTA

Defending champion India will open against Pakistan in the Asia Cup men's hockey tournament to be played here from May 23 to June 1.

India and Pakistan will face each other in the last match of the opening day of the tournament.

India is placed in a tough Pool A alongside Japan, Pakistan and hosts Indonesia, while Pool B consists of Malaysia, Korea, Oman and Bangladesh.

After Pakistan, India will play Japan on May 24 and Indonesia on May 26.

The tournament will be played in a Super4s pool format with top-two teams from each pool progressing to the next stage.

MARUTI SUZUKI

NEXA

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